

No. 11-18'63

Paris

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Well, here I am in Hotel Napoleon. It is 2:10 AM.

Nobby took me to the airport in London. I sat beside a guy, a Frenchman, on the way over. He advised me to not take a cab or taxi from the airport but to take the bus and then a taxi at the end, saying I would save quite a bit of money. Well, I had experience in Paris all right. I looked around when I got to the lobby in the airport and saw no one that I recognized, so I went right out and got on the bus. Earlier today, or rather yesterday, I had had Red-hill cable Sidney saying I was coming on a given flight and then I planned on going directly to Hotel Napoleon because I knew he, Sidney, would be very busy and I didn't want to interrupt him. So, after a long bus ride downtown, and the bus stopped once by the Arc de Triomphe and then went quite a ways further on down to its stop. I couldn't seem to make sense out of the picture. There was a queue of about 40 or 50 people and a taxi would come along maybe once every three or four minutes. At this rate it would have taken me a couple of hours. So I spoke to the starter on the cabs and told him where I wanted to go and after considerable difficulty and showing no imagination on his part, he said, "Oh, Hotel Napoleon". I said yes, so he told me to get to the end of the queue - or rather he pointed and said a lot of things I am sure meant that. I had just got there when the next cab came up. The first thing I knew here was this starter coming back to get me to get in the cab. He had put an Englishman in and he argued that the hotel I wanted to go to was more or less in the same direction. Well, we covered the city of Paris pretty thoroughly. The cab driver went way over in one direction and finally stopped and asked a policeman where Napoleon Hotel was. The policeman told him, so off we went in a different direction, pretty much reversely the direction we had been going. We finally got the other fellow

back to his hotel and then, after a long drive, here we come to Hotel Napoleon, right at the foot of the Arc de Triomphe! If I had gotten off at that stop in the beginning, I could have walked without any difficulty whatsoever.

As I got in the lobby, who should grab me but Maarten Niermeijer. He and van der Walle were down here on a service job and were staying over for the Show. In fact, Maarten is planning on going back to Soest with me next Monday during the day.

No sooner had I got to my room than Sydney Darmon called me. He was unhappy that nobody had met me. It turned out that Maarten and van der Walle had gone to the airport but had gotten into a heavy traffic jam and were about 15 minutes late, so they beat ~~there~~ ^{their} way back.

Everybody was worried about me getting lost, which of course I was. The cab driver had not been able to speak any English at all other than to say "one". He told the Englishman and me about several historic spots as we went by them, I am quite sure I recognized the words he used and some of the buildings looked a little familiar, but I am afraid I didn't understand even though he was talking slowly. Every once in a while he would turn around and look at me while he was driving down the street and say, "Comprenez-vous?" I would have to say, "No, sorry." After he left the Englishman off he did this even more. I had quite a lecture and discussion all the way across Paris - not getting anywhere really conclusive, however. I am sure I understood a few things he said, but not very many. One of the things he said to the Englishman and me was when he heard the other fellow was an Englishman, he said in French, ending up with DeGaulle, something about Marseillaise. The Englishman understood right away and told me that in the Memorial Day services the band, apparently, had not played the French National Anthem and also it had left out

some of the music that was always played. De Gaulle was standing strictly at attention waiting for the anthem and when he didn't hear it finally he turned in great wrath and said a few unkind comments to the people around. The cab driver obviously thought it was quite funny and he mimicked De Gaulle in facial grimaces and bombastic language, making a big show of it. --- Finally, after he got me to the Hotel Napoleon, he got across to me that he wanted 14 francs 50 centimes, so I gave him a 50 franc note and he gave me back a dollar for 5 francs and then 30 francs in bills, and then he asked, "Tip, un franc?" So I reached into the silver I had, pulled out a 50 franc piece, which is a 50 old franc or half of present franc, and gave it to him. He thanked me and off he went.

Well, after I got my bags in my room I beat it back downstairs in a hurry and the three of us rushed out to the show where Sydney was going around in a somewhat dazed manner trying to finish up the last details on the booth. The booth looked quite nice for one built in such a rush, but there were many, many little details that needed to be cleared up. Finally, we talked him into going out to dinner with us and Pierre Webber came along.

We went to _____ and had quite typical French food, consisting of a veal kind of shishkabob and a really wonderful piece of apple pie à la mode afterwards. It was a non-top crust pie and was extremely sweet. Ichiban oishi.

We all went back to the Show after that and checked on a couple of things around the booth and finally the three of us foreigners headed back for the hotel, after Sydney had given me his exhibitor's pass so I could get in early in the morning, so now at 2:25 AM I guess I had better get some sleep.

(12:15 AM) Thursday Night - These people around here can sure spend a lot of time just sitting around. The Show breaks up at 6:30 in the evening so Sydney asked us all to come out to his house. First of all it took us about an hour to go what should have taken only a few minutes because of traffic. We sat around and talked and talked. The telephone rang and it was Bill Tinlin and the new fellow that is going to be head of the Arras plant. They came out by cab and we sat around and talked a lot more. Of course it was fun. Sydney is a nice guy and his wife his sure nice also, and we met all the youngsters. There were the two older boys, a daughter, and a younger boy, who, incidentally, was missing most of the upper front teeth.

Finally, we headed off - that is, Maarten, van der Walle, Bill, the new fellow and myself - we picked up a meal on the way but again this took an awful long time. We got back to the hotel not far from midnight. Got our keys at the desk, several people left calls to be awakened in the morning, and we went on up to our rooms. Well, when I went to wash my hands a little bit of water came out, enough to get a moderate lather, and then I heard the characteristic sucking back in of air. While I was lathering my hands I noticed the bath tub was about half full of water and I couldn't understand it, and then all of a sudden I saw the light - no water in the hotel and they had come around to put some in the bath tubs just to take care of you. Well, it was nice of them to do that anyhow! Maarten came up to my room shortly. He also had a bath tub full of water and nothing coming out of the faucets. Best guess Maarten could make was that there was another one of these strikes on but I guess we will know better tomorrow.

Right in the middle of the MESUCORA report. I am starting this on Friday afternoon - late afternoon - and I've got to really get to work.

I'm on the balcony looking down on the so-called 3rd floor. There is only a 1st floor and a 3rd floor. The building is triangular in shape with a hexagonal hole in the middle of this 3rd floor. The aisles are a mixture of triangular and hexagonal pattern which results in an almost impossible maze to follow in an organized manner.

I don't care how hard one tries, in Paris you just don't get back to the hotel in a reasonable time. Right after the Show, Sydney was taking Gerry and Ike out to his house, so Maarten, Joseph van der Walle and I came right back to the Hotel. We saw Bill Tinlin, went only about three blocks to eat some dinner, then a short walk, and here it is 11:30 PM. when I finally get back here at the hotel. This short walk was with Maarten, because Bill and Joseph wanted to stroll too slowly. They wanted to do a real Champs-Elysées bura! Maarten and I walked quite rapidly but we did walk quite a distance - all the way to the end of the bright lights and back.

This subway isn't anywhere as near as noisy as the New York subway, even though this is apparently one of the oldest trains in the whole system.

We got on at Odéon and will get off for transfer at Châtelet (?)

Now we are on one of the newer trains - pneumatic tires running on flat reinforced concrete tracks - sure a big difference. Only trouble now is that when you talk other people will hear you.

In the stations they have a large map of the subway or Metro system with lights at each station. Down below you can select where you want to go to and it will show you by a string of lights which way to go and what transfer stations to use.

Odd Item - Sydney mentioned at lunch the other day that anyone who has six children under 18 years of age can get a 60% reduction in railroad train expense, and he is fixed for life with a minimum of 30% reduction even after all the children have left home.

This is Saturday Night (16 November). Russ Milham was coming in at eleven o'clock with John Burnett, so Sydney Damon, Gerry and Ike went out to the airport immediately from the Show at 6:30. Maarten, Charlie Wragg, who arrived this morning, Joseph and I went to the hotel and dropped all our papers. I traded cameras, since I have been carrying a nice Leica belonging to Pierre Webber at the Show - I picked up my stereo, took a picture of the Arc de Triomphe from pretty much in front of the Napoleon Hotel on Avenue Friedland. We walked over to Avenue des Champs Elysées, ate an inexpensive meal in a restaurant along the street there, walked down to the Obelisk Concorde, then over to the l'Opéra, down the Avenue de l'Opéra, through the pedestrian tunnels to Palais du Louvre. I took a Mamiya picture ^{there} ~~of~~ the arch in the Arc du Carrousel showing the obelisk

and Arc de Triomphe. Then we walked down the Quai du Louvre to Pont Neuf, across R. Seine to Île de la Cité, then down along the island to Blvd. du Palais, ~~crossed~~ a bridge down into the student district to within a block or so of Sorbonne, we stopped and had coffee, beer and hot chocolate and discussed the combination we had - Englishman, Belgian, Netherland, and American, then we went down into the Metro and without too much difficulty came up to air on Avenue du Wagram and walked a couple of blocks to the hotel.

Just after we got inside the door, ^{Plone Webber and} Mike came in with John Burnett. The rest of them had gone off on some sort of tout, so Maarten and I disappointed the clerk at the desk again and came up to our rooms too early.

Boy, was I impressed by the buildings in this fair city. The Louvre, for instance, goes on for blocks and blocks and never can you see all of it, in fact there is always more hidden than you can see. De Gaulle, apparently, passed a law recently which stated that all of the old buildings had to be cleaned. Many of them have been sand blasted and the difference is night and day. Those that are only partly done are almost white on the cleaned area and very close to black on the uncleaned. Wherever a thorough job has been done on all the buildings that whole section of the city lights up.

I think I remember a song about how wonderful Paris was in the rain - wish I could remember all the details because it looks pretty dreary right now outside my window with a heavy, steady rain.

This is Sunday morning (17 November) and we are going back out to the Show today - ought to clean it up pretty well, except of course the things that I missed.

Back to the hike last night (Saturday). It was quite uneventful but extremely beautiful during most of the hike. All of these freshly cleaned stone buildings are very thoroughly lighted so that Paris is beautiful at night now. But when we got down close to Sorbonne the streets were covered with groups of students of all races, creeds and colors. I didn't see any negro girls but there were certainly a great number of negro boys, and there didn't seem to be too much of a color distinction except for one small restaurant we went by which was pretty nearly entirely negro.

Incidentally, Johnnie Burnett within the first five minutes of my having met him got into his brief case and brought out the two tapes you sent. Dōmo arigato gozaimashita.

Of course, down near Sorbonne is a very old part of the city. The buildings are crowded close together, the streets very narrow, far from attractive buildings and very few if any have been cleaned.

Eating lunch again on Sunday - the Express (?) Dining room - very good meal. They are doing an amazing job of very fast servings and still very nice palatable food.

Sunday evening - Show closed at 5 o'clock tonight. Sydney asked me to go up to his house with him. He had invited at 7 o'clock, for drinks and a snack, Laurie, John Burnett, Ike, Russ Milham, and Gerry Gleason, as well as me. Hilda sure had a houseful of men. Finally about 9:30 or 9:45, Laurie commented to me that he wanted to head back to the hotel, so I got Sydney to make a telephone call for the three old men, John Burnett, Laurie, and myself (!) but before we got through a second cab was ordered too and the three young

also came back. The only difference was that the first three came to the hotel when the cab arrived and the other three didn't.

This evening when we came back to the hotel it was raining moderately hard, so I figured the best thing to do was to come up to the room and get working on the dictation for the Show. I've sure got a lot to go yet.

Before I forget it, Bill Tinlin has been telling about some difficulties they are having with some material sent over from Redhill and Gerry Gleason was also talking about difficulties that he and ~~I~~^{IKE} have run across with products shipped from Redhill, so I now think there is a fair chance I will go back to Redhill with Gerry a week from tomorrow, that is on Monday, and plan on coming home either Tuesday night or Wednesday during the day. Please tell Peg I am definitely planning on Thanksgiving and I certainly will not be too tired to drive the Shoe.