

NEW YORK

Herald Tribune

EUROPEAN EDITION

21 RUE DE BERRI 21

Société Anonyme
CAPITAL: 2,500,000 FRANCS
R. C. Seine 90.162

Telegraphic Address:
HERALD - PARIS
Chèques Postaux: 380.13 Paris

PARIS. Jan. 28, 1938

Dear Bill (Ring),

Many thanks for the New Masses, which is arriving so fast at the office that I can't keep up with it. It fills a gap in my information sources which needed filling. So do my teeth. I am going to have an abscess absceded in the next few days and will keep you posted on its progress via my usual weekly bulletin, which I have been sending you under an assumed name.

I bought several Christmas presents myself, but still have them in my room. The difficulties of beating the customs racket overwhelmed me at the last minute. I was going to give you a book, either The Life and Death of a Spanish Town or Ends and Means, I forget which. I have read the first and liked it. The first two or three chapters of Mr. Huxley do not impress me very much.

In answer to your questions on the state of the nation:

1. The only pressure that has been brought to bear on the government to back up Spain has been brought by the Communists. It was only about 16 pounds per square inch at the peak, and now I think they have pretty well given up the idea.

2. The Radical Socialists are sincerely anti-Fascist, but I am not sure that ~~they~~ they can be described as sincerely Popular Front. The party is not quite comparable to anything in the

United States, but is probably closer to the Republican party than to the Democrats. It is definitely not interested in socialism. It is interested in keeping the government of France under the control of Parliament and Parliament under the control of the Radical Socialists and in keeping the country at peace. It is the great middle class party, including almost all of the small town-folk and peasants. It is the liberal party of France. I imagine it appeals to so many people because it has no very violent beliefs. Just now it is divided into three main groups, of which the most progressive is the "Young Turks," headed by Daladier. To revert to your question, I don't think they will get a chance to desert the Popular Front, because they could not get enough votes without the Socialists and Communists, and the members of their own organization who would not hear of it, and they could never ally themselves with the royalists or fascists and still hold up their heads.

3. Trotskyism has a pretty small following here. It probably has more working-class adherents than in the United States, inasmuch as you say there ^{are} ~~are~~ none at all there. I shouldn't think there are more than 20,000 anti-Soviet communists in the country, although I have nothing to base these figures on. The syndicalists and anarchists are probably as strong as the Trotskyists.

The cause of the cabinet crisis is still something of a mystery. Some say that Bonnet maneuvered the whole thing to make himself Premier and get rid of the Communists. Some say a rift appeared in the government when Marx Dormoy, Minister of the Interior, wanted to arrest two big-shot capitalists (members of the Comité des Forges) in connection with the Cagoulard plot and was turned down by Chautemps, who thought it would shake the country's credit too much. Some say that André François-Poncet, French Ambassador to Germany, arrived in town with the news that Germany was planning some kind of drastic action in

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March, which made a more national government advisable. Some say that the government suddenly found itself without any money, but this is too common a condition to create alarm. The issue, of course, was exchange control, which the Communists and Socialists wish to put into effect in order to keep French capital in the country, but Bonnet and Chautemps would not have it. The Communists at first resolved to vote against the new government, but changed their minds at the last minute. The government is still pretty shaky, though, and probably won't last more than a couple of months.

If you know what month Silvia's opus is appearing in Cosmopolitan, let me know, because I don't see it very often. I have an even money bet down on Silvia to nose out Juliana, but I guess I will have to wait until next summer to collect. There is very little gambling to be had here. I haven't found anyone who will play bridge for more than the equivalent of \$.0161 a point. I play very little.

I am expecting to hear shortly from Ralph Heinzen, head of the U.P. here, concerning a job which he said would be open within the next two weeks. Heinzen ranks very low among the sons of bitches in the newspaper world, I understand, being a double-crosser and by-line-stealer, but I am getting increasingly fed up with the New York Herald Tribune, European Edition, and would welcome the change, as well as the money, which would probably be around \$50 a week. I told L. Hills as much this

afternoon, and he told me I could ~~have~~ have a 100-franc raise, which is not much but something, and he would try to think up something more interesting for me to do, such as writing some kind of a column.

I am always in a state of uncertainty about some new proposition, job or idea, but there is a good chance that I might get the U.P. job. If anyone else had been as encouraging about the prospects as Heinzen was when I saw him, I would say it was in the bag, but I am told that he promises employment to everyone who comes in to see him.

A couple of times I have almost gone down to Spain, but couldn't quite swing it. I know the head of ~~the~~ foreign propaganda for the government, a German exile who makes his headquarters here, but he thinks that I couldn't do much good there unless I could persuade the HT or some agency to use my stuff regularly. The HT is not interested in covering the war first hand. There is an opening now for a U.P. correspondent with Franco, but I don't think I will ask for it. I don't know enough Spanish anyway.

Waverly Root, who is a good friend of mine, and whose wife is a very good friend of mine, was fired last week by the U.P. (It is not his job that I am considering) for sending out a story that François-Poncet had said there would be trouble started by Germany in the spring. Genevieve Tabouis, political dopestier for L'Oeuvre, left-wing Radical Socialist paper, and one of the best (which is saying little) of the approximately 104 daily papers in Paris, carried the same story, but stronger. She said that Anschluss would take place in March, followed by some kind of a Nazi-engineered uprising in Czechoslovakia. Miss Tabouis, though possessed of quite a reputation for knowing what is going on, has been getting increasingly wild in the last year or so. Anyway, Waverly was fired ~~for~~ because the U.P. lost its only two customers in Berlin as a result of the story. As a matter of fact, Hitler has been slowly

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freezing out foreign news services anyway, and it was probably just an excuse, but someone had to take the rap. ~~Here~~ Waverly was and is also correspondent for the Politiken in Copenhagen, which pays him a little more. The Roots may be in Hollywood next summer, in which case they will call on you. Joanne, who is a French girl, born in Nice, is my most consistent drinking companion. At least she was while Waverly was working from midnight to 8 a.m. for the U.P.

A fellow worker of yours on the Mirror has been employed here for the last three months in much the same capacity as I, rewrite and copy-reading. Arthur Wright. Some of his mental processes are a sort of caricature of my own. He is continually preoccupied with distinctions between prepositions and conjunctions and similar matters. He is all right, though.

If you think of it, you might send me a few airmail stamps.

How did you come out on the Screen Writers election? If you are still on the board, you are not upholding the family reputation which I am establishing. Last November, I picked the Little Flower's plurality within 3,000 votes. I took John's advice and bet on California on the 1st inst., and netted 500 francs on the day by adding a sentimental wager on Rice against Colorado.

Love ,

Jim

