

*Robert L. Davis 1807121*

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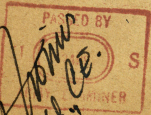
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*Robert L. Davis  
Capt. CE.*

6 MARCH 1945

DEAR FOLKS:

TODAY WE DID SOMETHING IN TOWN THAT WAS UNUSUAL, TO SAY THE LEAST. IN THIS LARGE TOWN AREA, THERE WAS A NOTICEABLE LACK OF OBEDIANCE OF THE ORDINANCES AND RULES COVERING CIVILIAN CIRCULATION. THE SITUATION WAS NOT LIKE SOME OF THE SMALLER TOWNS WE'VE HAD, WHEN A FEW MEN, EVEN A COUPLE OF US, COULD GO OUT, AND COVER THE ENTIRE TOWN IN NOT TOO MANY BLOCKS.

SO WE TOOK A SOUND TRUCK OUT AND WENT UP AND DOWN THE STREETS, BROADCASTING THE CIRCULATION HOURS AND THE NEW RULES. THE MUNICIPAL AREA WAS VERY LARGE, AND WE COVERED HALF OF IT THE FIRST DAY. EVERYWHERE WE FIRST WENT, WE FOUND PLENTY OF PEOPLE ON THE STREETS. AS WE RETRACED THE AREAS, WE FOUND THE STREETS EMPTY, SO REMARKABLY EFFECTIVE IT WAS. THERE WAS NO END OF TROUBLE AT FIRST, ADJUSTING OUR VOICES TO THE SOUND APPARATUS, AND ITS NEEDS FOR LOUDSPEAKING. SOME OF THE PEOPLE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND US IN THE BEGINNING, AS THE LOUDSPEAKING WOULD MAGNIFY OUR ACCENTS AND MISTAKES, BUT WE FINALLY OBLIATED THIS BY SPEAKING VERY SLOWLY AND DISTINCTLY. THESE GERMAN PEOPLE JUST WANTED TO BE TOLD SOMETHING DEFINITE TO DO. EVERYWHERE THEY CLUSTERED AROUND THE LOUDSPEAKERS, STRAINING TO HEAR AND UNDERSTAND INGBER OR BRADY OR I (OUR THREE INTERPRETERS). THE BROADCAST WAS TAKEN FROM AN OFFICIAL PROCLAMATION, AND A PART THAT I WROTE (OR THE CAPTIAN WROTE AND I TRANSLATED.) DAVIS WAS PRETTY ANXIOUS BOUT THAT TRANSLATION OF HIS, WANTING IT TO BE EXACT, SINCE IT WAS TO BE SPOKEN TO SO MANY THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE. IT TURNED OUT OK, WITH ONLY ONE SLIGHT ERROR, WHICH I CORRECTED AFTER THE FIRST TWO OR ~~XXX~~ THREE READINGS.

MARCH 8

THESE GERMANS ARE HAUGHTY BASTARDS, AND REALLY HAVE TO BE TONED DOWN. THIS AFTERNOON THEY ALMOST RIOTED IN PACKING INTO A NARROW HALL TO BE REGISTERED. I YELLED TO LAPAN TO COME WITH ME AND "READ THE RIOT ACT." HE AND HANES AND I DID JUST THAT, AND IF YOU DON'T THINK HANDLING 500 PEOPLE CLOSLY PACKED IS TOUGH, WHEN THEY'RE JAMMED AND YELLING AND OBSTINATE, JUST TRY IT. WE DID IT, WITH ABOUT FOUR CIVILIAN POLICEMEN. WE FINALLY UNSLUNG OUR RIFLES, AND JUST STUCK THEM INTO RECALCITRANTS, AND SHOVED. IT WORKED, THO' IT WAS ABOUT A THIRTY MINUTE JOB TO FINISH IT UP. LAPAN AND HANES AND I (AND THE THREE OFFICERS) ARE TOUGHER WITH THEM THAN THE OTHER THREE. TO ENFORCE THE ANTI-CIRCULATION ORDINANCE, LAPAN WENT OUT TO HAUL IN VIOLATORS. HE BROUGHT THEM IN IN A TRUCK. ABOUT THIRTY MINUTES, BEFORE HE HAD EVEN REPORTED BACK, A WOMAN CAME WAILING INTO THE OFFICE, ABOUT AN AMERICAN SOLDIER YANKING HER MAN OFF THE SIDEWALK AND STICKING HIM ON

a truck, AND SHE KNEW HE WAS BEING HAULED AWAY TO BE SHOT. WE LAUGHED AND SENT HER AWAY, KNOWING FROM THE DESCRIPTION WHO WAS DOING THE JOB. WE FIGURED THAT A SCARE LIKE THAT OUGHT TO KEEP THAT FAMILY OFF THE STREETS IN THE FUTURE. THEY ARE ALL OVER THE STREET AND THE RESULTING HAVOC THEY WREAK WITH MILITARY TRAFFIC CAN ONLY BE IMAGINED. THIS IS NO GAME, AND ITS ABSOLUTELY THAT THERE BE NO DISTURBANCE OF THE STREAMS OF LIFE TO OUR MEN AT THE FRONT. ONE WRECK OR HALTING OF A HEAVY TRUCK, ON ACCOUNT OF CIVILIANS, AND IT HAS UNFORTUANATELY HAPPENED, THO NEVER UNDER OUR AREA, AND IT MIGHT BE THE DIFFERENCE IN A SQUAD OF MEN LIVING OR DYING AT THE FRONT. EVERYTHING WITH AN INDIRECT CONNEXION WITH THE WAR AT HOME, OR BACK IN ENGLAND OR FRANCE, WHERE REPLACEMENT CAN BE QUICK AND AVAILABLE, HAS A DIRECT AND IMMEDIATE CONNEXION HERE, WHERE ONLY A FEW MILES AWAY, THE FRONTLINE GI'S ARE UP AGAINST A TOUGH ENEMY.

LOVE,

*Bob*