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NETWORK PROMISES NO MORE FAKE NEWS BULLETINS IN RADIO PLAYS

BROADCASTERS AGREE TO CHANGE RULES AFTER SUNDAY'S MARTIAN SCARE — NATION ASKS: WHY DID SO MANY BELIEVE?

NEW YORK, Oct. 31. — The Columbia Broadcasting System announced today that it will no longer use the form of a news bulletin in its radio dramas when there is any danger that listeners could believe the story is real.

The decision came one day after its broadcast of *The War of the Worlds* frightened thousands of people in many parts of the country. Network officials said they regretted the confusion and would study how such problems could be avoided in the future.

In Washington, the Federal Communications Commission continued its review of the program. Several officials said they hoped the radio industry would set its own stricter rules, so that the Government would not have to act.

WHY DID AMERICA BELIEVE?

Observers Point to War Fears in Europe

Many observers believe that Sunday's panic cannot be understood without remembering the events of September. During the crisis in Europe over Czechoslovakia, Americans sat by their radios night after night as regular programs were interrupted by urgent news from abroad.

Listeners have learned that when the music stops for a bulletin, something serious may be happening. On Sunday, the play used exactly that pattern. Some people who heard of "invaders" said they thought at first of a foreign army, not of creatures from Mars.



Herr Hitler, pictured on his release from Landsberg prison in 1924. Since Munich, fear of war in Europe has kept Americans close to their radios.

LISTENERS DESCRIBE NIGHT OF FEAR

Readers have written and telephoned the Ledger since Sunday to tell how they spent the evening of the broadcast.

A schoolteacher in Newark said she gathered her neighbors' children into her kitchen and waited for the soldiers to arrive. Only when she telephoned her sister in Philadelphia did she learn that nothing had happened.

A college student reported that his whole dormitory ran out into the street. A bus driver in New Jersey said several passengers begged him to drive away from the city as fast as he could.

Many others, however, said they were never frightened. They had heard the opening announcement, or they simply turned the dial and found that every other station was playing music as usual.

HOW BIG WAS THE PANIC?

No one yet knows how many people were truly frightened. Early reports spoke of a whole nation in terror; today some reporters believe the first stories may have been exaggerated.

ON THE RADIO TONIGHT

7:00 Evening News Round-Up

7:30 Songs of the Prairie

8:00 Dance Music from the Hotel Roof

9:00 Symphony Hour

10:00 News of the World

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"The radio people should be ashamed. My mother is seventy and was ill with fright all night."

— A Reader, Brooklyn

"Shame on the listeners who did not check the facts. A play is a play."

— A Reader, Queens

"Perhaps we have all learned a lesson about believing everything we hear."

— A Reader, Trenton, N. J.

THE NOVEL BEHIND THE PLAY

H. G. Wells, the English author, wrote *The War of the Worlds* in 1898. In the book the Martians land in southern England, not New Jersey. The radio version moved the story to America and told it as live news.

CLASSROOMS DISCUSS THE SCARE

Teachers in several city schools used Monday's lessons to talk about the broadcast. Pupils were asked how they could tell a real news report from a story, and where they might check a surprising piece of news.

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