

Rachmaninoff Declares He Is Real Refugee Without a Home



SERGEI RACHMANINOFF.

Great Pianist, Now Past 60th Birthday, Arrives in Dayton for Concert.

Declaring himself a real refugee, with no definite place to call home, Sergei Rachmaninoff, world-famed pianist and composer, said rather wistfully that the United States had not recognized his Russia when interviewed here Monday morning in his suite at the Billmore hotel.

Therefore, he begged to be let off from passing any comment on the negotiations completed by President Roosevelt and Commissioner Litvinoff whereby the Soviet government and the United States establish trade relations.

"We will see how things have gone in two years when I come back again and then I will be able to tell you what I think about it," he said with a somewhat forced smile as he closed the subject.

Enjoying Tour.

But Rachmaninoff is by no means assuming a sad attitude toward the situation in general. On the contrary, he is thoroughly enjoying his tour and with a keen sense of humor and in language with a quaint tinge of dialect he declared that he had come to Dayton two days ahead of his concert to give the newspaper photographers plenty of time to get his picture in the paper.

The great pianist, who passed his 60th birthday in the spring, arrived in Dayton with Madam Natalie Rachmaninoff Sunday, coming in from Birmingham, where he appeared in concert Friday evening. He will be the third attraction of the artist series, being conducted by J. H. Thimmon and Patricia O'Brien, playing a concert in Memorial hall Tuesday night.

Times have been hard to all lines of artistic endeavor, he says, but he emphatically will not admit that the time ever will come when there will be no art or appreciation of art.

The radio he believes to be a great disseminator of music and he lauds great achievements in that line highly. But at the same time he declares it makes people with talent lazy and rather than practice to gain perfection for themselves they secure their music over the air.

Banned Playing.

For himself, he believes photograph records to be much better than radio presentations, for when one likes a selection he has heard on a record he can repeat it as many times as desired, while with the radio he must take what comes forth and then only once.

Rachmaninoff's feeling in regard to Russia is influenced by what has happened to his own compositions, for some three or four years ago the Soviet government banned their playing. Whether anyone is allowed to play them now or will be under the new recognition he does not know.

He was highly gratified recently when another Russian refugee, Bouin, now living in France, was given the Nobel prize for his story, "Gentleness from San Francisco."

Immediately, Rachmaninoff said, he called Bouin his congratulations, signing the message "Gentleman from New York." It gave him a glowing feeling of satisfaction to learn that the world outside of Russia had recognized a Russian of the old regime.

The great pianist practices but about two hours daily while on

tour. He calls that little time when the present tour ends in February he will go to Europe, rest for a month, then begin four-hour daily practicing in anticipation of concerts he is to give mostly in England and France.

He has a summer home in Switzerland and there the family of six persons congregates for the heated season. Though it rains nearly all the five months the family is there, he says he likes the place immensely though the balance of the family does not.

Debut 21 Years Ago.

Rachmaninoff recalled Monday that it was just 24 years ago that he made his debut as a pianist in New York and that just 15 years ago he began his concert tours in this country. Since that time he says he has played some 800 concerts, touring every year.

He is quite proud of the fact that he was given a degree by the University of Nebraska and thinks Americans are highly appreciative and delightful everywhere.

Particularly was he impressed with the appearance of Dayton as he had glimpsed it from the hotel window, seriously comparing Main street to the Champ Elysees in Paris for beauty.

Alert in manner and with the kindly courtesies of the old world protruding at every turn, Rachmaninoff is exceptionally obliging to newspaper persons. He promised them he would play his famous "Prelude" as an encore at the concert and for those who heard his name mispronounced on the radio Sunday, it may be added that it goes as spelled with the accent on the "ma," and not as if spelled Rachmanenoff with the accent on the "nee"—A. S. Key.

RETAIL MERCHANTS BOARD WILL MEET

Determination as to whether the local trade council to be established by the Dayton Retail Merchants association to enforce the retail code shall consist of eight or 16 members and possible selection of those members will occupy the attention of the board of directors of the organization at a meeting late Monday afternoon. The council is being established in accordance with instructions received from national headquarters and is to represent eight lines of retail activity in which merchant members of the association are engaged. The work of the council will not be done publicly.

WALTER VON BRO

(Owing to the illness of Walter written by Paul Yauitz until Mr. V. A. COLLETT WHO CAN'T SIT REACTIONS OF A SECV WRI

Dear P. Y.: The rumor comes from authentic sources that Fifi Dorsey and her Maurice Hill have been secretly hitched for the past two weeks. The ceremony is supposed to have taken place on route. The officiating who went out to get you a glass of water last Tues. returned casually this morning. He brought the water and, not finding you in, left it in the upper left drawer.

By HAROLD CRAW