

L.J. - P. &amp; S. Monday,

Dec. 15, 1947.

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(<sup>London</sup> The conference of the Big Four Foreign Ministers ~~has ended~~ at London is over: a complete failure.) And, ~~they have~~ adjourned ~~it~~ for the first time, without setting a date for <sup>another</sup> ~~their next~~ meeting. (The adjournment ~~was~~ taken on the motion of Secretary Marshall, who said that no useful purpose could be served by debate on the other points of the agenda before the Conference.)

The final session this afternoon was as acrimonious as any of the preceding ones.

For the complete failure of the proceedings, Soviet Russia is entirely and solely to ~~be~~ blame -- so said our Secretary of State. (All possibility of agreement blocked by Molotov's attitude on one issue after another -- reparations, German frontiers, the economic unity of Germany.) Secretary of State Marshall pointed out that three out of the four delegations at the conference had announced themselves willing to decide on those points there and then, but, added Marshall -- these are his words: -- "The Soviet Union alone refused to agree." And he added: "It seems impossible at this

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time to make practical progress."

General Marshall pointed out that the United States went to the conference to work for a comprehensive settlement -- a settlement to overcome the present division between the powers. Uncle Sam, he added, hoped to obtain an agreement for Austria and to reestablish that country as a free and independent state, also to put Germany on its feet. But the Soviet delegation blocked every effort.

Britain's foreign secretary, Ernest Bevin, presided at the final session and proposed that the Ministers deal with the question of German reparations, particularly the Russian claim for ten billions.

Molotov blocked even that one by suggesting that a delegation of Germans, organized by Communists, be heard by the conference. Secretary Marshall immediately announced that Mr. Molotov's motion was not acceptable. Then he explained that the Germans will be heard in good time -- that is, they are to be heard at the peace conference. With that, the British and French Foreign



Ministers agreed.

In the final moments of the session, Secretary Marshall tried a few soothing words, expressing the hope that the next time the Foreign Ministers met, it would be in a happier atmosphere.

But blunt, forthright Ernest Bevin did not feel in a soothing mood. Said he: "The way we have been treated and accused makes me wonder whether this is a body that ever will be able to settle the European and the German problem."

Bidault virtually echoed the sentiments of Bevin, when he said that he could not guarantee that the French efforts to conciliate the Russians could be continued or even maintained.

The Foreign Ministers are expected to leave London immediately, to report to their governments on the flat failure of the London conference.

## ROMANIA

The Communist-controlled government of Roumania has seized the property of two of the biggest British oil companies in that country. The pretext they are using is an accusation that those companies were guilty of bad faith, deficient production, and stealing oil from sub-soil belonging to the government.

One of the companies is owned partly by Dutch investors.

The British have frequently charged that Soviet Russia now completely controls the petroleum industry of Romania.



## AMBASSADOR

We have on these shores a new Ambassador from the Soviet Union. His Excellency Alexandre S. Paniushkin, arrived at New York today, beaming with optimism or, what you might describe as optimism in a Russian. The first thing the New York newsmen asked him was whether he had hopes of improving the shaky relations between Uncle Sam and Soviet Russia. To which the new Moscow Ambassador replied cheerfully: "Anything is possible under the sun."

Paniushkin, we hear, has been a diplomat for eight years. He went into that service at the top, when he was named Ambassador to China in Nineteen Thirty-nine. Since then he has been employed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow; and, recently, at the conference of the Big Four Foreign Ministers in London, he acted as a consultant to Molotov.

The reporters, of course, asked about the sensational news from Moscow yesterday, the devaluation of the ruble. The Ambassador replied that it was news to him, but he thought it was an excellent idea ~~in~~ and would have a most salutary effect.

## FOREIGN AID

Congress today lost little time adjusting the difference between the Senate and House versions of the Emergency Foreign Relief bill. Then the Upper and Lower Houses quickly approved the compromise, which sanctions the giving of five-hundred-and-ninety-seven million dollars to the countries of Western Europe, and China, as provided in the bill originally passed by the House.

These millions are not yet appropriated, but, the measure does empower the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to use a hundred-and-fifty-million dollars for emergency aid to Europe, at once, to tide things over until the appropriation is passed.



## PRICES

Uncle Sam has warehouses bulging with wheat, flour, peanuts, prunes, and, other things too. So says Senator Martin of Pennsylvania. At Pittsburgh today, Martin made the statement that if the Secretary of Agriculture were to stop buying and just put on the market some of what he already has bought, the present high cost of living would take a nose-dive.

Senator Martin then went on to tell how the Department of Agriculture bought and destroyed some seventeen carloads of white potatoes; the equivalent in food value to three million ~~bushels~~ bushels of wheat. And he said ~~that~~ that illustration can be repeated over and over.

In Washington, the Commodity Exchange Authority insists that speculators also are largely to blame for high prices. That the high margin requirements on the Stock Exchange, having forced gamblers out of that field, they now are trading heavily in food and other agricultural produce. That in the fiscal year Nineteen Forty-seven. deals in the "futures" market amounted to 12



thirty-three billion dollars' worth of agricultural commodities, twice what it was last year. So the Commodity Exchange Authority is asking Congress to give the government authority to demand high margins in ~~the~~ commodity trading.

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The Republicans in the House today tried to put through a bill to control inflation, a bill drafted by Congressman Wolcott of Michigan, a bill that would permit ~~the~~ industries to make voluntary agreements to reduce prices. Also for increasing the gold reserve required of Federal Reserve banks; and extending government controls on export and transportation for just one year.

The Republicans -- in the House -- tried to obtain a suspension of the rules so this could be voted through without debate. For this they would have to have a suspension of the rules, which requires a two-thirds majority. Not only did the Democrats refuse,

but twenty-six Republicans also declined to agree to the suspension. So, there will be no legislation to cope with inflation until next year. Congress is scheduled to adjourn on Friday.

ADD PRICES

Late this afternoon, four of Mr. Truman's Cabinet Ministers presented an administration program for curbing inflation, <sup>They presented this</sup> to the Banking Committee of the House. The sponsors were Secretary of Agriculture Anderson, Secretary of Commerce Harriman, Secretary of the Interior Krug, and Secretary of Labor Schwollenbach.

<sup>Four</sup> The Secretaries want immediate control over wholesale prices, the cost of meat, butter, eggs, grain, farm machinery, lumber and other building materials. Under this plan there will be no attempt to control retail prices, unless the wholesale controls fail to bring down the cost of living. <sup>they want</sup> Moreover, wages <sup>are to be</sup> regulated in all industries where price controls are applied.

The four Secretaries were emphatic in their insistence that this program does not mean bringing back O.P.&L. or anything like it. ~~The very name, O.P.A., brings shudders to the spine of any member of the government.~~ <sup>And</sup> The Secretaries do not ask for the creation of any new bureau <sup>or</sup> ~~of the~~ alphabet agency. <sup>they say</sup> Such controls as they propose can be handled by agencies already in existence.



VENEZUELA

The weekend presidential election in Venezuela seems to be regarded as an historic event. Previous balloting days in that prosperous country have been somewhat turbulent. Bayonets playing a bigger part than ballots.

(Today's reports from Caracas ~~and~~ describe yesterday's presidential election as the first genuinely popular vote in the history of <sup>Venezuela.</sup> ~~that country.~~)

Although the returns are not all in, there's no doubt about (the successful candidate, one Romulo Gayaygos. Who, and this is a surprise, never has been a general. Romulo Gayaygos is a writer and educator)-- sixty-three years old. He was a professor. ~~But~~ But, in recent years has written successful novels. However, he isn't a newcomer to official life, for he has been a minister in several cabinets, and also has held elective office.

His victory is a landslide.

He is leader of what is known as the Democratic Action party, which has mild Socialist leanings.

What is more fortunate still for the new Venezuelan President is that his party's candidates for most of the state and local offices are also in the lead. Which means he will have a united administration behind him.

NIMITZ

Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz has swallowed the anchor. That's the way sea-faring men put it when one of them retires. He gave up for good today his all-important post as Uncle Sam's Chief of Naval Operations.

In accordance with the ceremonies practiced in the navies of all countries, the out-going chief was ceremoniously piped over the side. As he went, he heard himself officially described as one of the greatest naval officers of all time.

~~Secretary of the Navy~~ <sup>Sec.</sup> ~~John D.~~ Sullivan declared that ~~Admiral~~ Nimitz now joins the ranks of <sup>our</sup> ~~these~~ great naval heroes, ~~Jones, Barry and Farragut,~~ and John Paul Jones.

~~Secretary Forrestal took part in the rites, also General Dwight Eisenhower, Admiral Leahy, General Vandegrift and ~~Leverett Spitznagel,~~ and Nimitz's successor, Admiral <sup>of course Admiral</sup> ~~Louis~~ <sup>Louis</sup> Denfeld.~~



## PIRATES

Less than a month ago, the cables from Asia brought us news of ~~the up-to-date capers of~~ pirates in the China Sea, one of the oldest and most profitable ~~happy~~ hunting grounds for mariners who sail under the Jolly Roger. Yesterday, the master ~~was~~ of a Dutch vessel and his passengers were the victims of a trick that out-did any of the tactics of the old-time

"gentlemen of fortune", Teach alias Blackbeard, English, Bartholomew Roberts, or ~~even the old bold mate~~ <sup>Si</sup> of Henry Morgan, ~~not to say~~ <sup>mention</sup> the famous lady pirates, Anne Bonny and Mary Read.

Among the vessels of the Java-China Packet Line is the good ship VanHutzsz, whose master is Captain Klass Vliek, "the skipper with the American accent," as they call him on the China coast. When the vessel put into Hong Kong, some twenty-five Chinese passengers came aboard, bound for Swatow on the South China coast. They seemed perfectly respectable fellows, but when the ship reached Bias Bay, some fifty miles out of Hong Kong, those innocent passengers suddenly turned into fighting men, armed to the teeth.

Since the end of the war, it has been the custom for passenger ships plying those waters to carry strong guards to protect them from pirates. ~~Just~~ For once, Captain Vliek had left his vessel's guard on shore in the Netherlands East Indies, where it was not of much use in this situation.

*the pirates*  
First ~~of all, they~~ locked up the Dutch vessel's officers and barricaded the crew in the hold. Then they went to work on the passengers, sixteen hundred of them ~~and~~ all terrified. They held command of the ship overnight, cutting her <sup>out</sup> engines and blacking out all lights. The loot they got from the sixteen hundred passengers is reckoned at somewhere in the neighborhood of half a million dollars; that <sup>is</sup> ~~means~~ half a million American, not Chinese ~~dollars~~.

Soon after sunrise today, a fishing junk hove in sight. The pirates with their machine guns fired at the junk and forced it to come alongside the Dutch vessel. On this they loaded their loot, also six rich Chinese passengers whom they <sup>are</sup> ~~are~~ holding for ransom. Among the hostages is the



Commissioner of the Chinese Bureau of Overseas Affairs at  
Swatow.

~~Their next trick was to lower a motor boat from the  
Dutch ship, the captain's gig, and at gun's point <sup>they</sup> shoved into  
it the skipper, the first mate, and six of the crew. Thereupon  
Junk and motor boat sailed towards shore side by side, ~~but~~  
<sup>there</sup> halfway the pirates gave the crew of the motor boat a signal  
to return to the ship.~~

~~At last sight, pirates, loot and hostages were on  
their way to somewhere in South China.~~

~~There's a tale to draw tears of envy to the eyes of  
Long John Silver or his creator, Robert Louis Stevenson.~~

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DOG

From Colorado Springs tonight, there's good news for General Mark Clark -- news of a case of A.W.O.L., the miscreant captured and held by military police after an absence of two weeks from his official duties. The name of the absentee is Swift. Rank - a canine private on the General's personal staff. A Cocker Spaniel by the name of Swift.

Two weeks ago, the plane on which Swift and his master were traveling to San Francisco stopped off at Colorado Springs, and Swift took it into his head to make a side trip to Cripple Creek or Victor, or up ~~escape~~ ~~Well, you can imagine what happens when a Pikes Peak, maybe. Or perhaps just the usual quick look at Manitou and the Garden of the Gods.~~ ~~Everyone's dog is lost.~~ Everyone round the air base at Colorado Springs took a hand in the search, but it wasn't till yesterday that a party of military police caught up with Swift -- Swift caught in the act of doing something that a pedigree pooch should never do. He was found lining up in a pigs' chow line with a lot of porkers

on a near-by farm. Gone was his swanky green sweater and his immaculate hairdo. *Just where he had been he wouldn't say.* *But covered with burrs*

and mud and ~~his ears oaked with pig chow~~ Swift was a mess.

*Myers Ave. in Cripple Creek. Or is called Julian Street?*

Tonight, he's in the guard room waiting shipment to San Francisco to join General Mark Clark, who, doubtless, will know what disciplinary steps should be taken. I wouldn't know, would you, Nelson?

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