

LEAD FRANCE

C. J. - P. & X. Monday, Jan. 5, 1950.
(Lake Placid)

(13)

The New Year begins on a note of politics far and wide - parliamentary struggles, election manoeuvrers, and all the noise of political battle.

The focus of drama tonight was on Paris, where the proceedings in the National Assembly were something like a game, with a chalking up of scores. And the results were ~~xxx~~ close and exciting. It was a battle of the budget, with Bidault bringing in the biggest ever. The figure - two-trillion-two-hundred and twenty-five billion Francs, more than six-billion-three hundred million dollars.

The whole thing settled down to a long string of votes of confidence. The budget was voted on, not as a whole, but one section after another, and each time the Cabinet said - "give this an okay or we resign."

In two votes of confidence last Friday, the Premier won by a ~~xx~~ majority of eighteen votes. But today the government was almost overturned.

The section of the budget that came up called for a tax increase - always painful. But higher taxes ^{there had to be -} ~~were necessary~~ to balance the budget - and that, in turn was necessary or France might lose a chunk of Marshall plan money. Even so, it was touch and go, and the Cabinet squeaked through by a mere majority of four-three hundred ~~ix~~ to two-hundred-and-ninety-six. But then things became easier. The Ministry won three votes of confidence in all today, the final by a majority of twenty-one.

So the government at Paris has gone through its critical test, and has escaped an overturn that would have thrown France into new ~~new~~ political turmoil.

BRITAIN

Britain begins the new year with a buzz of guessing about the general election, which will have to be held during the first part of the year - and today the signs were evident that the big battle of ballots may be at hand. Today Prime Minister Attlee cancelled his winter vacation, and returned to Number Ten Downing Street - and there was quick surmise that he might be coming back to London to set the date.

He has a heavy conference scheduled with the Lord President of the Council, Herbert Morrison - Number One strategist of the ~~XXXX~~ Labor Party in business concerning votes. Morrison is the grand master of the policy of keeping the election date a secret. The Labor government can call the voters to the polls whenever it pleases - the only limitation being that an election must be held by this coming August. So the bright ~~xx~~ idea is not to let the opposition know just when the election will be held - which handicaps the ~~XXXX~~ Conservatives in

timing their own campaign. The Morrison slogan is - keep them guessing,^R Down in the latitudes near the Equator, foreign Secretary Bevin has made an abrupt change of plans. He attended a conference at Colombo in Ceylon, a meeting of Foreign Ministers of the ~~the~~ States of the British Commonwealth- and was scheduled to go to India for talks with Premier Nehru. (During Nehru's visit to the Occident, he gave Bevin a special invitation, and Bevin accepted. But ^{now}he's hurrying back to London, (which leads ~~me~~ to the belief that he is returning,) to take part in discussions of election strategy.

Still further signs are seen in the weekend elevation of five labor members of Parliament to the Peerage. Their names, headed^d by Minister of Defense A.V. Alexander, were on the list of honors for the New Year, announced by King George yesterday. Which continues the interesting British way of sending Labor Party Socialists to the House of Lords - labor peers. But the immediate significance

is noted in the fact that, departing upwards from the House of Commons, the five new noblemen leave that many vacant seats. Which will have to be filled by a by-election - unless there's a general election. That also is a reason for the betting in London tonight - that a date will be set within the next two weeks for the British voters to go to the polls.

CONGRESS

There were busy scenes in Congress today - although the legislators do not assemble for the new session until tomorrow. The activities today were by carpenters, painters, mechanics, cleaners - in a hurry to complete a big job ^{started} right after Congress went home for the autumn recess. Actually, there'll still be some work all through this present year, but more than seventy percent has been done - in renovating and modernizing ~~the~~ these venerable halls of Congress.

Something badly needed - because there hadn't been any real improvement since the chambers of the Senate and the House were first occupied back in the administration of President James Buchanan, just before the Civil War. So, after nearly ninety years, they were obsolete and moth-eaten and something was finally done - a five million dollar remodelling job. Tonight the walls are newly decorated, covered with silk brocade - gold in the Senate, light blue in the House of Representatives. Ugly beams have been removed, and graceful ceilings installed.

About time!

There are new seats, more comfortable - and there is sound-proofing too, making the acoustics better. During the new session, the lawmakers will find it easier to make themselves heard. Although one they still need [^] to discover that much needed miracle, which would enable a Senator or a Congressman to be heard only when he's talking good sense.

Today, early arrivals in Washington had a look at the new streamlined surroundings, and there was general approval. Senator Humphrey of Minnesota was inspired to remark: "Now let's do something about streamlining the filibusters, which is much to the point - because the new session promises filibustering complications right away.

Sounds like the Civil Rights bill -; but there's some thing else in addition. In fact, the first filibuster seems likely to be on the subject of oleomaragarine. During the last session the House of Representatives passed a bill to remove the taxes from colored oleo - in spite of bitter

opposition from the dairy farming, butter producing states. They're afraid that tax-free-colored-oleo, selling cheaply, will run down the price of butter.

Today, Democratic leader Senator Scott Lucas of Illinois said - the Senate will take up the oleo bill right away - Wednesday. Which is countered by threats of a filibuster - Senators from the dairy and butter states promising that they'll talk the bill to death. If that materializes, it will put the southern Senators in a strange position - on the side ~~opposing~~ opposing the filibuster, although they are the world's greatest ~~exponents~~ exponents of the art of talking the bill to death. But the cotton states Senators are in favor of the bill, because oleomargarine is partly out of cotton seed oil - and represents a boost for business in Dixieland.

However, the southern Senators will not be deprived of their favorite ~~pleasure~~ pleasure. Democratic

leader Senator Lucas also announced that civil rights will come up in the Senate mighty promptly - the Truman racial program. The word in Washington tonight is that there isn't a chance of it passing; the Dixieland Senators being all set to give up the filibuster.

In addition to all of which, there's the question of taxes, a new social security bill, and the Brannan farm plan, not to mention other disputes, so the new year will bring no end of argument in those newly decorated halls of Congress, gold for the Senate, and Baby Blue for the house. And - plenty of opportunity for oratory to try out those new acoustics.

FORMOSA - Follow China

The debate about our policy toward China brings a recommendation from Former President Herbert Hoover ~~who~~ thinks the United States Navy should be sent to Formosa, headquarters of what is left of the Nationalist government - if such ~~xxxxxx~~ a step is needed to keep that vitally strategic island from falling into the hands of the Communists.

The statement is made in ^(response) ~~xxxxxxx~~ to a query from Senator Knowland of California. And still later - Senator Taft of Ohio ~~xx~~ comes to the support of the Herbert Hoover proposal that the Navy be sent to Formosa.

CHINA

At Hongkong today Captain "Two Gun" Davey Jones has postponed the sailing of his ship. He's a formidable ~~skipper~~ skipper, as indicated by his ~~real~~ nickname - "two-gun", but today the State Department in Washington intervened, and reached out a long arm to Hongkong - where the U.S. Consul told Captain Davey Jones that the attitude of his crew would be investigated. Were they being compelled under threat of force, to make the voyage?

All of which is part of the fact that the Isbrandsen Steamship Company insists on the right of its vessels to sail to the Red controlled port of Shanghai - and thereby run the blockade ^{(proclaimed} ~~by the Chinese~~ by the Chinese Nationalists at Formosa; and our State Department refuses to recognize that blockade but also gave warning that a skipper has no right to endanger the lives of people aboard his vessel - several of the Isbrandsen vessels having been shot up by Nationalist gunboats. But the steamship line asserts its own right to trade with Communist Shanghai.

The immediate point at issue is the steamship - Flying Arrow, loaded with inflammable cotton and a large quantity of explosive chemicals - dangerous cargo, if shooting should begin. But, Captain Davey Jones is a hard bitten jack tar, and lived up to his name of Two Gun by declaring that he would take the Flying Arrow into Shanghai - and never mind the shooting. He was making gestures of what would have been brave indeed, had the cause, in which he displayed all that courage, ~~been~~ been a little more patriotic than the mere business of trading with the Chinese Reds.

Anyway, the crew of the Flying Arrow displayed ~~some~~ somewhat less valor than the skipper - the sailors quoted as saying that they were being compelled to make the voyage to Shanghai. They couldn't leave the ~~skipped~~ ship because of regulations, which require sailors to have passage money home. Moreover there were statements that Captain Davey Jones had issued revolvers to his

ROSE BOWL

That sure was a thriller at the Rose Bowl, with the game depending upon the cool nerves and educated toe of Jimmie Hague - who kicked a perfect twenty-eight yard field goal, which gave Ohio State the victory over California ^{seventeen} to fourteen. That's always a moment of moments, when a game depends on one kick. But California insisted on piling another thrill on top of that, a last minute bid that put the game in suspense almost until the whistle.

WEATHER - END

The headlines for western cold weather were set in British Columbia today, when the thermometer hit a record-breaking low ^{- way north} ~~in~~ the area of Prince George. Temperature - fifty-seven-and-six-~~ix~~ tenths degrees below zero. The previous mark for cold was set in Nineteen Twenty-eight when the temperature ~~ix~~ fell to fifty-seven below.

All of which wasn't much of a headline in the town of Snag, the Yukon, half way between White Horse and Fairbanks. Snag really gets cold, and ^{way up there} today ~~it~~ was sixty-two below. Because last year, at ~~Snag~~ Snag, the bottom fell out of the thermometer registering eighty-three below. ~~was~~ When you run into frosty weather like that, I suppose you could call it, hitting a Snag, ^{Nelson?}

officers - the Two-Gun skipper turning them into
a two-gun first mate and second mate. (~~This news got~~

~~back to the United States, and caused a stir among
the families of ~~xxxx~~ sailors aboard the Flying
Arrow - and they made protests.~~

Hence the intervention of the State
Department today - ~~xxxx~~ with an investigation to
find out if the members of the crew really want
to sail to Shanghai, or if they're being forced,
~~at gun point or otherwise.~~ If ^{the sailors} ~~xxxx~~ want to

return home, the State Department will put up the
money - in accordance with the regulation that
sailors may not leave their ship unless they have
passage home.