

L.T.-W. Times, Dec. 29-53.

In Indo China the French are reported to have stopped that Red drive toward the vital fortress town of Savannakhet. Planes bringing the Viet Minh columns to a halt with bombs, rockets and machine gun fire. At the same time, a French Viet Nam counter attack on the ground is reported to have wiped out around five hundred of the Reds, with another five hundred captured, also a large cache of ammunition and weapons captured -- including automatic rifles and some artillery.

So today the French command is in a far more optimistic frame of mind than last night. "Situation well in hand" reads the latest bulletin.

Some observers today even predicted that Ho Chi Mins troops would abandon their attack on Savannakhet.

## DULLES

We may attack Red China - if the Chinese renew the war in Korea or if the Chinese intervene in Indo-China. So says Secretary of State Dulles.

Sec. Dulles says he is not pessimistic about the situation in Indo-China. That our Generals do not think it's all as critical as press reports indicated yesterday. That the talk about Indo-China being cut in two - is exaggerated. He says the Reds have always been able to infiltrate that region. That the normal supply route there is by water and by air, rather than by land. Moreover, Sec. Dulles does not believe that the rebels have sufficient troops to threaten Thailand.

At the same time, the Secretary of State repeated that we are taking the situation very seriously. And that a worse crisis would arise if Mao Tse Tung decided to send his own troops into Indo China.

He also stated that our withdrawal of two divisions from Korea will not reduce our military power in the Far East; because we have increased our strength in the air and on the sea.

SYNGMAN RHEE

Syngman Rhee calls on the U S to break off permanently all discussions with the Reds. The South Korean Premier, making the demand in a New Year's message to his people. According to Rhee, there is no chance for a peaceful unification of Korea. Because the Chinese are still on Korean soil. The South Korean Premier is fearful that Mao Tse Tung wants to dominate North Korea - and therefore will not free it voluntarily. Which means, in Syngman Rhee's interpretation, that the fighting will have to break out again in any case.

Our representative in Korea, Kenneth Young, is not so pessimistic about the discussions with the Reds. As he puts it, "who knows what's going to happen in the next month or two - or three or four months?" Then he added: "Time may prove what President Rhee says is true - but who can tell now?"



Kenneth Young is authorized to begin talks with the Reds in place of Arthur Dean, who is in this country. And Young says that we will still try to get the discussion going again.



GOLD

Still more Russian gold arriving in Britain.

This time around four million dollars worth -- ~~it~~ flown into London last night. Now in the vault of The Bank of England - along with the sixty million dollars worth of the precious yellow stuff sent to London by the Russians last week.

Bank officials and British diplomats refuse to discuss this ~~Red~~ Red gold. One expert however is inclined to the notion that Malenkov is waging a trade war aimed at us -- America. The Kremlin, exchanging gold for consumers' goods -in order to turn European trade toward the U.S.S.R. instead of toward the U.S.A. Malenkov using gold in an attempt to isolate America from Europe.

Russia's gold reserve, by the way, is estimated as second only to ours. The report is that they have been mining it at a ~~gta~~ great rate - with their slave labor.

## SLAVE LABOR

Incidentally, two Germans describe the life of a slave laborer in a Soviet Arctic prison camp. In Berlin today, a Miss Hergart Wilmanns and a Count Robert Von Butlar-Brandenfels told of their experiences when they were condemned to work in a place called the Vorkuta Labor Camp - in the Arctic - far northern Russia. The woman told how she was assigned to a giant furnace, a stoker. The Russians making her carry coal and also bags of ashes to a slag heap. Without proper clothing for the job, she said. "It was murder to leave the red hot furnace and work in the biting cold" she says, "in nothing more than a thin dress."

The Count, in describing the Vorkuta Camp told of half a million workers - both Russians and foreigners. One interesting point in his description, that the camp, covers an area as big as New York State. Guarded <sup>by</sup> the NKVD - secret police - with tanks.

The Count was put ~~■~~ to work in a coal mine, which was always wet, and always freezing. Another sidelight.

He says: "We were made to salute every guard, and shout, "Good day, Comrade Chief Citizen," a hundred times a day. And if you forgot it once, off you went to a cell."

Food? Mostly fish and soggy bread, with one ounce daily of sunflower oil - as a substitute for butter.

The woman had been given a ten year sentence for espionage. The Count twenty five years at hard labor. But after several years both sentences were commuted - and the two were sent home in the latest repatriation of prisoners from the Soviet union.



## AMERICANS

Two Americans return to freedom after spending years in Soviet prison camps. Last night we heard that Private Homer Cox, of Tulsa, Oklahoma and Leland Towers of San Francisco, would be released by the Russians. And today, both Cox and Towers turned up in West Berlin among some hundreds of Europeans sent back from behind the Iron Curtain.

The first thing the two wanted to do was catch up on what was happening at home; asking questions like: "Who won the World Series?" "Who's the Vice President now?"

Although in shabby prison garb they seemed to be in good health. And the years they had spent in Soviet prisons had not broken them in spirit or health.

## ROYAL WEDDING

A princess marries an archduke. The wedding in France today uniting the two great and ancient houses of Hapsburg and Savoy. Archduke Robert is second in succession to the non-existent throne of Austria-Hungary - which the Hapsburgs lost after the First World War. The Princess, Margherita of Savoy, belongs to the royal family of Italy - which was exiled after the Second World War.

The couple were married with full Papal honors in a Sixteenth Century French Church, by a Bishop. With the benediction of the Pope pronounced by the Papal Nuncio at the end of the Service.

There was one old Viennese touch to the wedding. The Archduke and the Princess kneeling on cushions filled with earth from Schoenbrun Palace in Vienna - the residence from which the Hapsburgs once ruled the Austrian empire.

As usual, other members of European royalty were on hand, among them, the brother of the bridegroom -

ROYAL WEDDING - 2

Archduke Otto, pretender to the Hapsburg throne; and exiled King Umberto of Italy. Oh yes, and there was only one reigning monarch on hand - Prince Henry of Lichtenstein, if you can call the head of the tiny state a monarch.

The Count of Paris was not there. He's the Uncle of the bride - and pretender to the throne of France. Why was he absent? The answer is like something from the days when European royalty really ruled. The Count of Paris would not come because he was refused precedence over his brother monarchs. Meaning, that the Count feels he tops them all - thrones or no thrones. The Count's attitude, the traditional French demand for precedence - a demand going back to the great days of the French Monarchy. And the Count de Paree thinks that the old court etiquette should hold good - even though almost all European royalty is now in exile. He was not on hand for the marriage of his niece.



## SHOULDERS

The man who arrested the Greenlease kidnapers - indicted for perjury. Former Police Lieutenant Louis Shoulders, to be held for trial after the finding of a Federal Grand Jury in Kansas City.

The reason - of course - that missing ransom money.

Now, Grand Jury charges that Shoulders, and patrolman Dolan, did not tell the truth. The point being, that Hall claimed to have close to the six hundred thousand ransom when he was captured. While more than three hundred thousand has not yet been recovered.

## SUB FIRE

The forest fires near Los Angeles that so far have caused millions in damage seem to be coming under control. The one on Mount Baldy has done serious damage to some six thousand acres of valuable timber. The second, - only fifteen miles - separates them - has swept this seventeen thousand acres in the Angeles National Forest and up Mount Wilson -- to within a few hundred feet of the famous observatory with the second largest telescope in the world. The telescope is housed in a steel dome. And those who work there have moved out of their cottages and into the observatory.

Los Angeles T V seemed in danger today. All the transmitters serving L.A. are on Mount Wilson. If destroyed, Los Angeles would have no TV -- not even the Rose Bowl game on New Year's Day.

Hundreds of men are fighting the Mount Wilson fire. Setting "back fires" in an attempt to stop it from

spreading. Using shovels and bulldozers to cut a wide gap near the summit. More than fifty water pumps brought in to use on the conflagration. A helicopter, circling overhead to direct the fire fighters on the ground,

The latest report states that the observatory and the T V transmitters have not yet been damaged. And the wind has died down - preventing the fire from spreading so rapidly. In the words of one official, "we have lots of water - and with not too much wind we stand a good chance of holding it."



## TRAUBEL

What happens when an opera star turns to singing in night clubs? Now, Helen Traubel, as we know was the top Wagnerian soprano at New York's famous Metropolitan Opera. Then she decided to take up singing in night clubs. This resulted in a row with Rudolf Bing, General Manager of the Met.

Bing had two objections to Miss Traubel's plan. First, that American night club audiences do not appreciate real music - so he said. And secondly, that she would ruin her voice, by singing in what he termed, "smoke filled" night clubs.

But Miss Traubel took the chance - and after three months, here is her opinion. Speaking at Miami Beach, where she has been appearing, she said that Rudolf Bing has a wrong opinion of night club patrons. That they're not at all stupid. And that she's been singing everything from Brahm's "Lullaby" to the "St. Louis Blues."

What about all the smoke? She says the places

where she sings are all air conditioned. No smoke.

And then she added:- "If Mr. Bing is so concerned about smoking and its effects upon singers' voices - why doesn't he do something about Metropolitan opera singers who smoke, and even endorse cigarette ads for television, posing in opera costumes and in opera dressing room settings?"

So, Harry, the lady doesn't repent.