

L.T. - GM BROADCAST - Dec. 22, 1954

(Charles Collingwood substituting)

C.C.: GOOD EVENING, EVERYBODY!

PETERSEN

At Alexandria, Virginia, outside Washington, a former code breaker at the top secret National Security Agency, Joseph S. Petersen Jr., pleaded guilty this evening to violating the espionage laws. Petersen told Judge Albert V. Bryant that he was acting in the best interests of the United States. The charge had accused Petersen of "knowingly and willfully" using classified information concerning the communication intelligence activity of the U.S. and foreign governments in a manner prejudicial to the safety and interests of the United States. After Petersen had been arrested by the F.B.I., it was determined that the country involved was not Russia. Both the Netherlands government and the U.S. State Department confirmed that the Dutch had received some of the information. Petersen reportedly had made ~~firm~~ friends with a Dutch Army officer stationed in Washington during World War II, a friendship which continued after the war.

FRANCE

Overseas, today's debate in the French National Assembly featured an impassioned plea by Mendes-France, who called for a ratification of the Paris accords to rearm West Germany by an overwhelming majority. There were outbreaks of pandemonium as he spoke; the Communists interrupting with boos and catcalls. As Mendes-France cried that a heavy majority for the pact would be the quickest way to get a high level conference with Soviet Russia while if ratification failed France would be isolated from her Western allies. The Premier emphasized the importance of decisive ratification by a large majority, saying a weak ratification would be almost as bad as a flat rejection. He wants France to go strongly for West German rearmament and the ~~SAR~~ Saar valley settlement. The National Assembly is frankly ~~xxx~~ reluctant, hesitant. The word from Paris is that the French legislators are likely to do exactly what Mendes-France advises against. The prospects are - a small majority for the Paris accords, a weak ratification, and this apparently will come about because of a large number of abstainers. The most powerful opponents of Mendes-France, the Popular Republican Party, have decided

they'll abstain from voting; they're all in favor of the West, but they won't support the Premier.

~~They~~ They reckon that by abstaining they'll assure the ratification of the pact - but it'll be by a small margin. This, tonight, is considered a probability. The decision is expected on Thursday or Friday

PRISONERS

The Secretary General of the United Nations came back to New York today after a quick trip to his native Sweden. He'll remain in New York for a few days then start off to China, where he'll try to negotiate for the release of the eleven American airmen sentenced to prison on charges of spying. Dag Hammarskjold to leave for China soon after December 26th.

Speaking of his trip to Stockholm, he says, "I got done exactly what I wanted to do." He flew to Sweden on a private mission, to accept a place in the Swedish Academy; but that was not all. In Stockholm, Dag Hammarskjold confabulated with the Chinese Reds' ambassador to Stockholm, discussing arrangements of his trip in behalf of the American airmen. He got things done in his talks with the

Communist emissary. He wouldn't say just what, but seemed optimistic as he returned to the United States.

EUROPEAN WEATHER Northwestern Europe is having a wild winter storm; winds up to a hundred miles a hour lashing the coasts from Scotland on down toward the Mediterranean. A Belgian vessel^{SL} reported sinking off the Dutch coast; a German freighter aground on a sandbank in the North Sea; a French steamer aground near Antwerp. The list could be continued on and on; more than a score of ships in trouble as the gale howls out from the Atlantic. It seems inappropriate for Christmastide, but weather authorities in Europe are saying "it's lucky the tempest is blowing now and not three weeks later." The spring tides are due in three weeks and the storm plus those high tides would bring about the same sort of disaster that struck two years ago, when there were disastrous floods in England and Holland; dikes of Holland broke and eighteen hundred lives were lost two years ago. Today the dikes are holding although there's some anxiety. In various places Dutch workers are piling sandbags to support the barriers against the sea.

AMERICAN WEATHER

And the American weatherman has freakish tidings to report: bitter winter in Florida and balmy temperatures in Montana. Today temperatures were well below freezing in northern Florida, where winters are usually mild. In Montana, Wyoming and the Dakotas, this time of the year it's the usual thing to have sub-zero cold. But at Billings, Montana, today the temperature was at 46 above, which is practically summer in these parts.

But all is normal in New England; a blizzard for the Christmas season; Maine and New Hampshire getting sixteen inches of snow.

This morning, by the way, brought the moment when winter begins officially; the sun at the point which marks the shortest day of the year.

FORMOSA

Formosa gix has given us an explanation of anti-aircraft shell fire that imperiled an airliner near Formosa. The big plane, with twenty-seven aboard, was flying along when shells began to burst in the sky, none of them coming close to the airliner, but it was alarming. The explanation - anti-aircraft practice by

a battery of guns belonging to the Nationalist Army on Formosa. They weren't shooting at the plane; they were shooting at aerial targets, and nobody had informed the airline crew of gunnery practice along the course they were taking.

BELGIUM

A dispatch from Brussels relates that Belgium, today, asked Spain for the extradition of Leon Degrelle, which was like summoning a ghost of World War II. Degrelle was then the leader of a pro-Fascist party, collaborating with Hitler's Nazis in their occupation of Belgium. He led a Belgian Fascist legion in the Nazi invasion of Soviet Russia. After the war Degrelle was tried for treason in absentia and condemned to death. But Degrelle disappeared, his whereabouts a mystery for years. Last week, in Spain, however, there was a parade of Spaniards who served with Hitler's army in Russia and one of those attending was Degrelle, who gave an interview in a Spanish paper. That was the first inkling the Belgians had that the former Fascist leader was alive, so now they're demanding his extradition.

ATOMIC

I've a letter here from a friend of mine, an ~~atomic~~ atomic scientist, a physicist at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, Truman Kullman, who tells me of an ~~unusual~~ unusual Christmas present, an atomic project for Christmas. "This idea," he writes, "is for the United States to make a Christmas present to the Holy Land of one or more nuclear reactors for power, medicine and research." Dr. Kullman goes on to say that a colleague, another atomic physicist, Professor Charles ~~Coryell~~ Coryell, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, recently returned from Palestine. "He came back," says the letter, "greatly impressed by the absence of real peace in the area where three of the major faiths of the world originated and by the difficulties caused by the low standards of living there. It seemed to me and to him," Dr. Kullman goes on, "that the living standards might be raised substantially by atomic power, which might also provide an incentive for the Jews and the Arabs to work ~~together~~ together." The atomic scientist suggests a reactor for Israel and one for the Arabs, too. Dr. Kullman says this atomic project has already been talked about; it

would be worked out thru the United Nations, which has approved President Eisenhower's atoms-for-peace plan, and in fact ~~Mr~~ General Carlos Romulo, the ~~Rhikkim~~ Philippine delegate, has proposed something similar; atomic power development, somewhere on the Israel-Arab frontier, in which the feuding Jews and Moslems would cooperate. Probably it can't be done before Christmas, but it would be a good Christmas present to the place where Christmas began, wouldn't it?

FAMILY

A Christmas idyl has come to disillusionment at Youngstown, Ohio, where Monday night the police noted a family trying to hitch-hike a ride - Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lilybridge and two children. The parents told a sad story; how their home in San Diego, California had burnt down. They were hitch-hiking their way to a town in Maine where they had relatives. They said they'd been on the road for a hundred and five days. The cops, full of the Christmas spirit, took up a collection amongst themselves, provided the family with food, shelter, Christmas presents and money, then sent them on their way east. Well, it was fine Christ-

was story for the Youngstown newspapers, radio and television; after which, alas, a series of reports came in. A citizen of ~~an~~ a neighboring town said he'd picked up the same family ~~in~~ last week and helped them. They told the same hard -luck story, but the other way around. They told him their home in Maine had burned down; they were hitch-hiking their way to ~~to~~ California. Another man in Ohio said he gave them \$100 last summer. On that occasion their house in Florida had burned down and they were hitch-hiking to Kansas. One radio listener sent in a clipping from a newspaper of two years ago, showing that the Lilybridge family had won the hearts of the people at Cannonsburg, Penna., telling how their home in Kansas had burned down and they were on their way to Florida. Actually, it appears, they come from Baltimore.

DOCTOR

At Lansing, Michigan, a petition to commit Dr. Charles Laughead and his wife to a mental hospital. The petition filed by Dr. Laughead's sister, who claims that her brother and his wife have become religious fanatics and neglect their three children. The doctor, you remember, was the one who was dismissed

from the Michigan State College Hospital because of the gloomy predictions he had made. He'd said that Chicago and the Middle West would be overwhelmed yesterday by a cataclysm of earthquakes and tidal waves, which prediction, said he, emanated from outer space; a few people only to be rescued by flying saucers from Mars. Well, nothing of the sort happened yesterday - and today the doctor explained that a last-minute reprieve had come in, that Chicago and the Middle West and other parts had been spared, reprieved at the eleventh hour by the "general" from outer space. Wonder who that could be, Hugh? Maybe the commander-in-chief on the planet Mars, maybe.