

LEAD

L.J. - Sunoco. Thursday, May 31, 1945.

(Kinew by Dr. R.C. Andrews. L.J. in Pacific war area.)

Good Evening Everybody

We hear some pretty unpleasant news tonight.

The Near Eastern scandal came to a head today, British troops are moving in to Lebanon and Syria, with the approval of the United States.

That promises to bring to an end a grim and ironic page in history. The French actions had thrown a dark cloud over the Security Conference of the United Nations at San Francisco. Just one year ago, the French themselves were in virtual bondage to the Germans. They were praying for the day when they would be liberated from their oppressors. For the last several days, their troops have been on Syrian and Lebanese territory, shooting and killing. The Syrians and Lebanese were in the position of asking the other nations to save them from the oppression and violence of the French.

Flames today are raging through the city of Damascus in at least two districts. Hundreds of

casualties have been inflicted in the capital of Syria and many are dead. Most of the principal cities of both Syria and Lebanon were cut off from the rest of the world. The French had severed communications. The situation had reached the point where the tribesmen in the desert had revolted and captured two French outposts. Everything was all ready for a patriotic rising in Lebanon against the French. British and American civilians were evacuated from Damascus yesterday, so severe had the hostilities become. The Chamber of Deputies in Damascus is in ruins, as well as several other public buildings. The former Premier of Syria charged that the French were using every kind of ^{modern} weapon, including tanks, guns and planes. It will be interesting to learn whether or not they are using weapons furnished them by the United States for their own liberation from the Germans.

Events followed fast and furious in this drama today. The British government received a note from the Egyptian Government, expressing its alarm. Then our

own State Department made public the text of a statement by Joe Grew, Acting Secretary of State. It was the text of a note from the United States government to the provisional government of France. It stated that there was an impression here and elsewhere that French representatives had been using threats of force to obtain from Syria and Lebanon concessions of a political, cultural and military nature.

The note then went on to remind the French that Syria and Lebanon are independent countries, so recognized by France and the United States. They are also members of the United Nations.

The note went on to say in effect that the United States values highly our historical friendship with the French but -- the communication ended with a polite phrase urging the government of France in a most friendly spirit carefully to review its policy toward Syria and Lebanon.

Obviously that note fell upon deaf ears in Paris. Since it was delivered by Ambassador Jefferson

Caffery on Monday French forces committed even worse hostilities upon the Syrians and Lebanese.

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The climax came tonight when Prime Minister Winston Churchill ordered British troops into Syria. It is believed in London that during the night he talked with President Truman over the trans-Atlantic telephone before taking the step. The announcement was made by Foreign Secretary Eden in the House of Commons.

Eden read to the Commons the text of Churchill's note to General DeGaulle. It stated that the British Government with profound regret ordered the Commander-in-Chief in the Middle East to intervene, in order to prevent the further shedding of blood in the interests of security of the whole Middle East. Churchill also reminded DeGaulle that this involved communications in the war against Japan. Churchill then used these words: "In order to avoid a collision between British and French troops, we request you immediately to order French troops to cease fire and to withdraw to their barracks". And he added: "Once the firing has ceased

and order has been restored, we shall be prepared to begin tri-partite discussions among the governments of Britain, France and the Levant here in London".

DeGaulle received the note all right. But the news from Paris is that he did not take his countrymen into his confidence about it.

Quite late in the day, the DeGaulle government acknowledged the Churchill note. But it did not release the news until it was too late for the evening papers in Paris.

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The next thing we knew was a bulletin from Beyrouth. It reported briefly that the French had taken Churchill's request to heart. Their commander in Syria and Lebanon ordered his troops to cease firing.

In Washington tonight it is considered quite possible that the French may have been using lend-lease materials to shoot down the Syrians and Lebanese. To be sure, the agreement with the French government provided that lend-lease material should only be used against the Axis. However, there was nothing to

prevent the DeGaulle government from transferring some of those weapons to Asia Minor.

It came to light today that early this month, the French killed or wounded more than ten thousand Arabs in Algeria. The uprising is described as a good rebellion. Entire communities of thatched and dirt homes were ~~levelled~~ levelled. French pilots in medium and heavy bombers obtained from the United States flew as many as three hundred sorties in a single day. French fighters in British-made aircraft followed up the bombers to strafe ~~the~~ the fleeing population. Others dive bombed Arab strongholds in the mountains. French ensorship had prevented the news from leaking out until today. It became public through the enterprise of the U. S. Army newspaper, Stars and Stripes. A correspondent of that paper said the shortage of food was just one of the primary reasons for the revolt. Interwoven with it are the always present political complications of French colonial policy.

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OKINAWA

On Okinawa, the Japanese ~~were~~^{are} retreating south from Shuri, with the obvious intention of standing on a new line. Our Marines and doughboys, after taking Shuri castle, fought their way into the heart of the town from opposite directions. At latest reports they were within a few hundred yards of effecting a junction.

South of Shuri, another pincers operation is closing around the entire area. Marines of the Sixth division advanced east from Naha, to a point less than a mile away from Major General Arnold's Seventh Division at Chan, two miles south of Shuri Castle. The actual physical occupation of the town is not yet completed, but our men are in effective control.

On the eastern coast, other units of the Seventh Division are shutting off the Peninsula of Chenen. When that operation is concluded, it will open the port of Yonabaru to American shipping.

At Tokyo, a radio spokesman for the Japanese explained the shake-up in the Mikado's Navy.

The commander of the combined fleet will have tactical

charge of suicide attacks. The suicide attacks in future may be made not only by planes but also surface men-o-war. The spokesman said that Admiral Ozawa had brought to perfection the special tactics of today.

CASUALTIES

30 Secs

American casualties in the war have now passed the million mark. The actual total is one million, two thousand, eight hundred and eighty-seven. Of those, two hundred and twenty-seven thousand and ninety-seven are dead; the rest wounded, missing or prisoners. Ninety thousand prisoners in Europe have already been liberated. The Army has had eight times as many casualties as the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.

So now our casualties are nearly four times the total of the First World War.

Everything is all set for the allied control of Germany to begin in a few days. Evidently, the Big Three governments are agreed on the main points of their policy. The Allied commission will meet soon in some German city. e

Joe Davies flew from London to "Frankfurt-on-the-Main" today to confer with General Eisenhower. You will recall that Joe has been in London as Special Envoy for President Truman. It was announced today that France will be represented on the commission either by Lieutenant General Koenig or General ~~de Tass-2-72~~ *de Tass-2-72*.

A conference of the war crimes commission began in London today. Sixteen nations are represented. Lord Wright, Chairman of the Commission, said that trials will begin within the "measurable future." The commission has already indicated two thousand, six hundred and fifty-seven individuals. This does not include any Nazi perpetrators of atrocities on soil conquered by the Russians. The Russians are doing their own job in their own way, and most effectively.

From London comes an unofficial explanation of the delay in bringing war criminals to trial. Newspapermen over there say there is reluctance in British official circles to have formal open trials with accused Nazis testifying for themselves. Such testimony, they say, might bring out facts most uncomfortable to certain high placed personages in Britain. That means, of course, those who were favorable to the Nazis before the war and egged on Neville Chamberlain in his policy of appeasement.

We still have no official explanation of the

sudden return from London of Supreme Court Justice Jackson. At any rate, no satisfactory explanation.

In Norway, there is great impatience with the official delay in bringing Vidkun Quisling to trial. Norwegians complain that Quisling's guilt is so obvious and so notorious, that there is no earthly reason why he should not have been tried and executed two weeks after his arrest. Quisling himself is protesting loudly against the diet of salted herring and potatoes on which they are feeding him in solitary confinement. The leading Quisling supporters are falling over their own feet in their hurry to give evidence, hoping to save their own lives.

A man left the White House this evening, who for more than twelve years has been one of the most valuable persons there. Steve Early, Press Secretary to the late President Roosevelt, resigned to become a Vice-President of the Pullman Company.

Steve has done an extraordinary job. For twelve years he served as liaison between Mr. Roosevelt and the newspapermen. The extraordinary part of it is that there is not a soul among the reporters who did not deeply regret the departure of Steve Early.

Since the death of the late President Early served President Truman as a special assistant. He received a note thanking him for his help to Mr. Truman in getting him acclimated to his new duties and responsibilities. In his farewell letter to the President, Steve pointed to one fact which deserves remembering. In all his years of service, he said, not a single press or radio reporter assigned to the White House ever revealed a confidence or violated a trust. And, he added, "there have been many confidences and

trusts during that time. They have my greatest respect,"
~~_____~~ "and I cherish the memory of
their friendship." *So spoke Steve Early.*

Incidentally, many people in Washington
have been having plenty of fun with Steve over his new
job. All day long, he has been receiving telephone calls:
"How ^{are} ~~is~~ chances for a lower berth to Kankakee?" or,
"Please get me a compartment to Miami." Some of these
requests have been serious and have come from real big
shots in the national capital.

JAIL BREAK

1 min

At Pittsburgh a couple of small boys were digging themselves a cave. As they put it, they were building a house. The ground where they were doing it was just outside Western Penitentiary. They had not dug very far before one of them fell through the earth into a tunnel. As he climbed out, the little fellows shouted to a guard who was patrolling the walls of the prison. He gave the alarm, and the Warden investigated. Sure enough, the convicts in Western Penitentiary had dug themselves a tunnel thirty feet long and two feet in diameter. It was all ready for the breakthrough.

So, if it had not been for the play-digging of two little chaps, one five and the other six, there would have been a spectacular jailbreak at Western Penitentiary. As the Warden said, it was not the fault of the prison staff that the tunnel had not been used. They did not even know it existed. Tonight they are thanking those little boys for saving their faces. Incidentally, they averted a public calamity.

And now Goodnight