

IBN SAUD

An attempted assassination of a King is commonly flashed with swift headlines around the world. But when the King is a potentate in the dim interior of the desert, it doesn't make such an immediate sensation. Still, a desert Monarch can be a personage of imposing consequence to the world, and that's true of Ibn Saud, autocrat of Central Arabia.

The story comes by way of the Holy City of Mecca, where he rules, swift startling scenes of sudden death in Ibn Saud's Oriental Palace. The lord of the burning sands is a towering figure, immensely tall for an Arab, six feet four, and burly in proportion. You notice his enormous hands, twice the size of an ordinary man's hands. He is fifty four. He has a hundred wives. He is a fanatical Mohammedan, and despises the ways of the Christian West, especially western prejudices against polygamy.

He wears the garb of the desert, head dress and flowing robes. Only when he reads, when he peruses that graceful Arabic

script, he wears European spectacles. The spectacles are one of his few concessions to Western ways. Another concession is - the machine gun. He has equipped his desert ~~arm~~ army with the latest military gadgets from Europe.

This is the stalwart champion of Islam, whom you see garbed in his stately desert robes, on his knees praying in the Mosque of the Kabaa, the holiest spot in Islam. Around him, before the Holy Stone, said to have been tossed from Heaven by Abraham, are city Arabs and Sheiks of the Desert in their flowing robes.

There's a sudden startling commotion. Four men dash out of the throng of worshippers. They draw daggers. They hurl themselves as the giant form of the King, but they never reach him. A roar of gunfire interrupts the prayers of the Faithful as the Royal guards, swift and alert, shoot down the would-be assassins before they reach striking distance of their intended victim. That's the picture to be visioned from the dispatch from Mecca, telling of the attempt to kill Ibn Saud, king of the burning sands.

SPY

At last, the case of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Switze, over in France, has come out into the open. That young American couple has been in prison now for over a year, held in secret confinement, on charges not fully revealed, with no particular time set for their trial. It was merely said that they had been arrested as spies and no amount of appeal by their families here in America has had any effect in making things clearer.

Today, however, in Paris, the two Switzes and twenty other people were indicted before Magistrate Michel Benon, and the indictment finally sets a date for their trial. It will begin in April.

Michel Benon is the same magistrate who heard many of the cases in the Stavisky fraud scandal. The indictment likewise reveals that the Switzes and the others are accused of trying to sell French Military secrets to a spy ring acting for Soviet Russia. This confirms the statements in the case at the time the Switzes were arrested, that the young couple had carried a package of films from France into Switzerland, where they handed the films over to a Soviet agent. The French secret police, who recovered

the package, claim that the Switzes fingerprints were on it and that inside they found two strands of Mrs. Switzes blond hair, which had got tangled in somehow while the package was being wrapped.

The Switzes defense is that the husband was given a package by a man in a cafe who asked him to deliver it, as a favor. Switze claims he did so without knowing it had anything to do with spy work.

CRIME

Twelve hundred is a large figure, when its twelve hundred prisoners. That's one tremendous mob which government agents have rounded up - a huge assortment of gangsters, racketeers bootleggers, narcotic dealers, smugglers, counterfeiters, and income tax evaders. There are also a whole lot of government agencies mobilized for this sudden wholesale drive against crime - The secret service, the narcotic bureau, the Customs Service, International Revenue Bureau, Alcohol Tax squads and the famous division of investigation of the department of justice.

Just to keep up the impression of magnitude, let's look at the army of government men who have been staging that series of raids from coast to coast. There are twelve thousand of them, and in many cases they were helped by the local police.

It all goes to show that it's really a big drive, perhaps the biggest coast to coast roundup of suspected criminals ever staged. It follows a series of announcements from Washington that Uncle Sam was out to clean up crime. That was the talk part of it.

Now comes the action the sudden swooping down. During

the hours of today the Government agents have been busy grabbing and bringing in those twelve hundred suspected law violators, and the arrests are continuing right now. Three hundred have been seized in the New York area alone. Over four hundred illicit liquor stills have been seized, also a counterfeiting plant.

Government officials say that the purpose is to give the criminals of the underworld a pretty good idea of the huge power and punch that Uncle Sam has mobilized against them. Today's coast to coast roundup should certainly convey that impression in unmistakable terms.

POST

Wiley Post took off from Burbank, California this morning 6:16 coast time, 9:16 Eastern Standard Time, and the plane was the good old Winnie Mae, the white ship that took him around the world not once but twice. Wiley had on his special rarefied atmosphere suit for the high altitude flight. Flying swiftly he disappeared into the east. Early this evening - just a little while ago he landed unexpectedly at Cleveland. Engine trouble brought him down. It had taken him eight hours to get that far so he couldn't have broken Roscoe Turner's coast to coast record. His stratospheric flight today was by no means a mere stunt. The thinkers of aviation believe that swift long distance transportation in the future will be done at rarefied altitudes, where the thin air provides a minimum of resistance and where the plane can whirl along at speeds unknown in the thick heavy air down below. Maybe Wiley Post hasn't yet found the answer - the way to navigate the stratosphere.

Wiley's is one of the two sky jaunts I talked about last night. The other one has been called off. The Army Air Corps has postponed its flight to Hawaii, that test of new blind

flying instruments. The reason is the weather. Flying conditions over the Pacific Ocean are bad, too bad for the trial. But its only a question of a short time. The army flyers are waiting and the minute the weather is good, they will go.

HOWE

In Washington the one theme of the day is -- Good wishes for Louis McHenry Howe, who is seriously ill. The President's personal physician is taking care of the Presidential secretary, who many insiders say is the man that put Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the White House. Twenty five years ago Louis Howe was a reporter on the old New York Herald. He was stationed in Albany covering State Government affairs. The small, skinny reporter struck up an acquaintance with a young state Senator. The state Senator talked liberalism to the reporter, and the reporter saw a vision. "Some day", he said, "That chap will be president of the United States". Two years later the state Senator came up for re election, but he fell ill with typhoid fever and was laid up during the critical period of the campaign. The reporter still seeing that vision took over the candidate's electioneering job, wrote statements, gave out press interviews, answered the mail. The state Senator was re-elected, and then went on to become Assistant Secretary of the Navy. The end of everything seemed to come when he fell a victim to infantile

paralysis, and had to fight a desperate battle against the malady. Still the reporter kept his vision.

And so when Franklin Delano Roosevelt entered the national political arena, became Governor of New York and then President of the United States, Colonel Louis McHenry Howe was with him all the time, credited with being the President's most trusted and intimate advisor.

TAX

Today is tax day -- also pink slip day. Everybody knows, but its also well to be reminded. Mr. C. C. Allen of the Internal Revenue Bureau in New York, and Collector Higgins, have asked me to pass along a memory jogger -- to wit that midnight's the deadline for filing your returns, also your pink slip. They must be in the Tax Collector's office by midnight.

The Senate is still dead-locked on the subject of repealing income tax publicity. The lawmakers are filibustering about it and it may be some time before they get through with their debate. The House of Representatives has turned thumbs down on the pink slip, and the Senate may do the same. If it does, why the income tax information you give will not be made public. The pink slips will be destroyed.

EDEN

Surely the wildest story in the news today is the one about the Queen of Eden being back in her paradise. And we have the word of ex-Governor Pinchot of Pennsylvania for it. Mr. Pinchot has had an encounter with that enchantress of the Galapagos. He was quite overcome by her, not by her charms but at the point of her pistol. "That island may be paradise", says Pennsylvania's former Governor, "but its queen is no angel". Whoever heard of an angel threatening to shoot so eminent and stately and elderly a gentleman as Gifford Pinchot, statesman of liberalism?

The queen of paradise of course is that Baroness de Wagner of whom we heard so much months ago. Remember? That wierd tale of the finding of two bodies on a small desolate island of the Galapagos group? One was the mortal remains of Alfred Rudolph Lorenz, a German who had been a companion of the queen. He had gone paradise-hunting with the Vienna Baroness and they had taken possession of one of the other islands of the Galapagos, uninhabited, but a benign place of tropical woodlands, swarming with fish and birds. It was told how the Baroness Eloise

Bousquet de Wagner ruled this South Sea haunt, pistol in hand, and called herself the Queen of Eden. But another paradise seeker came along, Robert Phillipson, a merchant of Paris. And the Queen took him to be her Prince Consort. Thus deposed, Alfred Rudolph Lorenz, the former Royal favorite, tried to make his way back to civilization, but the small boat on which he was voyaging was wrecked on a barren shoal and he died on a desolate island.

Later on we heard how the Queen of Eden had abandoned her Kingdom. The Government of Equador, which actually owns the Galapagos, intervened and told the Queen that so far from being a Royal Monarch she would have to behave herself if she wanted to stay. That made her exceedingly angry, and in a royal huff, she and her consort Phillipson, sailed away. Still later there were rumors that the slim, blond and tempestuous Baroness was in France and that Paris would be her paradise hereafter. But that report seems to be premature, as ~~it~~ is indicated by the experience of Gifford Pinchot, ex-Governor of Pennsylvania. It seems that Mr. Pinchot, his grey hair blown by the winds of adventure recently

betook himself from Pennsylvania to Paradise. He found the Baroness very much in Eden and very much its Queen -- the wild gal of Galapagos!

The story is told in a letter from Marguerite Davis, a St. Paul woman who is conducting a cruise in the Pacific. Former Governor and Mrs. Pinchot are members of that cruise party. They landed at Post Office Bay on Charles Island in the Galapagos. They came to a deserted house; and then they followed a path leading through a tangle of forest. Ex-Governor Pinchot was striding in the lead. Suddenly there was a rustling in the bushes beside him and a shrill voice called, "stop". The Ex-Governor felt something poke into his ribs. It was a dainty pearl handled revolver held by the steady hand of a woman. She was blond, rather wildly handsome and dressed in a gown of the latest fashion, there in the jungle. She stared at him with cold blue eyes, always keeping the pistol pointed at him. "I don't like you" she shrilled. "Go or I'll shoot you". So the Ex-Governor of Pennsylvania went. He and his party returned to the shore.

A little later another member of the party, wandering around, met the Queen of Eden and she ~~xx~~ seemed to like him a little better. She told him something about her strange kingdom. She said she always had at least two men contending for her favor - paradise hunters who drifted out to the islands where subsistence can be had for the gathering. And the Queen of Eden governed her suitors, pistol in hand. She told the member of the Pinchot party that when she got tired of one she'd lock him up in a shack and take another. The one she locked up she never saw again. She said she supposed they escaped and got away from the island. It's the wildest kind of story all right. The Baroness from Vienna certainly seems to be the wildest woman of them all.

There's one vivid point of authentication, the cold fact of the Queen of Eden's pearl handled pistol pointed at Ex-Governor Pinchot of Pennsylvania.

ST. PATRICKS

Since Sunday is St. Patricks Day, and the parades will be held tomorrow, tonight is a good time to consider some of the wonders of the Saint whose day is celebrated with such undiminished fervor. Of course we all know that St. Patrick drove the snakes out of Ireland. But some of us may be not so familiar with the stately legend that on one occasion St. Patrick was offered a favor from Heaven. And the favor he selected was that seven years before judgement day that seas shall sweep over Ireland, waters engulf the land. That's to keep the Irish from listening to the temptations of the Anti-Christ, when that fiend appears shortly before judgement day.

I learn this from an article in Rockefeller Center Weekly, which goes on to add that when the solemn moment comes on judgement day, St. Patrick himself will preside in judgement over the Irish.

So no wonder tomorrow there will be marching and celebrating wherever the Irish are to be found, and that means all over the world. So meanwhile, Erin Go Bragh, and --

SO LONG UNTIL MONDAY.