

SYRIA

L.I. - P. & G. Monday, Dec. 26, 1949.

At Damascus the President has resigned -- the head of the Syrian Government giving up his office. This follows the failure of a new premier to form a Cabinet and to win a majority in the Syrian Parliament.

At Damascus last week a bloodless military revolt tossed out the Chief of Staff of the Army -- the Syrian strongman. Which concerned the plan to amalgamate the Republic of Syria with the Kingdom of Irak -- a union opposed by the younger army officers. They believe that if their army is combined with the forces of Irak, which are much larger, they will lose out, the small Syrian army going into eclipse. Hence the military intervention in political affairs -- which today resulted in the resignation of President Haschem el Atassy

CHINA

The news from China tells of a desperate battle today, although it had seemed as if Nationalist resistance on the mainland had collapsed completely. But bitter fighting still goes on in the Far West -- near Chengtu. The Reds captured that important city and then pursued the enemy force, which seemed to be breaking up. But the Nationalists there are commanded by General Hu Tsung-nan, who is just about the most obstinate enemy the Communists have had to face. All through the war with Japan, he battled against the Reds, -- ~~and the word is that, right now, his forces are in such a spot that they cannot escape. They must either surrender or fight it out.~~ So, commanded by a determined officer, ^{His forces are now} ~~they are~~ fighting it out -- in what is described as the bitterest conflict the Communist armies have had to face in their sweep across China.

MOSCOW

A late bulletin brings a Soviet charge that in the Second World War the Japanese used American prisoners in experiments for bacteriological warfare. Last week we had a Moscow announcement that the Russians were putting twelve Japanese ~~pxi~~ on trial, charged with having plotted to make military use of deadly germs -- and it was noted that this announcement came just as General MacArthur was demanding information about several hundred thousand Japanese prisoners of war -- taken by the Red Army and still missing.

Tonight the story of the trial continues, with the Moscow radio quoting testimony said to have been given by a Japanese Major General. He is quoted as saying: "The immunity of American war prisoners to infectious diseases is being studied at Mukden. A scientist specialist was sent to study the immunity of Anglo-Saxons to infectious diseases."

All of which is something new. The Japanese in the war committed many atrocities, but this Moscow

trial brings the first statement that they used American prisoners in experiments for bacteriological warfare.

This Moscow story ~~there~~ is a late bulletin, ~~tonight's~~ ^{but} already there are repercussions. In Washington, Joseph B Keenan, who was prosecutor at the trial of War Criminals in Tokyo, declares that his investigators found no evidence that American prisoners had been used by the Japanese as guinea pigs in the germ warfare experiments. The prosecutor at the Tokyo trials declares that he and his investigators staged a three-year inquiry into all phases of Japanese doings in the war -- and found no hint ~~of~~ to support tonight's bacteriological story from Moscow.

EARTHQUAKE

Japan reports a severe earthquake, which did widespread damage in areas north of Tokyo. A number of lives were lost, ^{and} many people were injured in a series of tremors -- which are believed to be connected with recent eruptions of Mount Asama, one of Japan's active volcanoes.

On this side of the Pacific, there is earthquake news too -- a ^{tremblor} ~~quake~~ today in Southern California, felt in Los Angeles and centering at Inglewood. Scientists of the California Institute of Technology described it as -- "a minor quake of very small intensity".

KICKBACK

There is a Washington demand for an investigation of a scheme for kickback payments in the preparation for the celebration of the Sesquicentennial. It was in 1800 that the Federal government moved to the newly built city on the Potomac, and this coming year of 1950 marks Washington's One Hundred and Fiftieth anniversary - Sesquicentennial. So a celebration is planned, called Freedom Fair. That means government contracts to construct buildings -- and now there are charges that a salesman of influence has been on the job. Recalling - the Congressional investigation of the Five Percenters last year.

Senator MacCarthy of Wisconsin calls attention to charges made by George M. Parker, a contractor in Gaithersburg, Maryland -- who says that he was offered the job of putting up Freedom Fair buildings, if he would pay ten percent. Last year's uproar was about the --

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"Five percenters." But this names a -- "Ten percenter".

The reply is -- that it is all a mistake, that the

kickback applied to buildings to be put up by private

sources in connection with Freedom Fair, but Parker insists

that he was shown ^{(blueprints of} ~~the~~ government buildings.

Today Senator MacCarthy demanded that Attorney-

General McGrath hold an investigation of this "kickback"

^{connection with}
business in the Washington Sesquicentennial.

TRUMAN

President Truman performed a congenial task today -- ~~and he did it in a way to fit the occasion.~~ Spending Christmas at his home town, Independence, Missouri, he presided over the dedication of a statue of Andrew Jackson. -- ~~and he did it in a proper Jacksonian way.~~

Independence is in Jackson County -- and the monument stands in the square of the Court House in which Harry Truman served for many years as a member of the County Court.

He was introduced by his old friend, Mayor Roger Sernon, whose own oration was as follows: "Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States." Whereupon Harry Truman said it was the shortest speech he had ever heard from his old friend, the Mayor -- who usually goes in for a longer brand of oratory.

~~That remark was Jacksonian, in a way -- Old Hickey having been known for his terse, pungent speech. ~~xxxx~~~~

There was the time when the great Chief Justice John Marshall handed down a Supreme Court decision very much against the wishes of the White House. Whereupon, Old Hickory said: "John Marshall has given his decision -- now let him ^(enforce) ~~enforce~~ it." Which defiance of the Supreme Court was not so Constitutional -- but it was in that rough Jacksonian manner of speech.

After the ceremony, ^{the} ~~some~~ President Truman, bothered by autograph hunters, was walking home -- bothered also by the news photographers. When up stepped a little girl in bobby socks with a camera -- one of those three-dollar snapshot affairs. The Chief Executive posed for her. Then, speaking to her with elaborate courtesy, he pointed to the cohort of news cameramen in the offing and said: "Young lady, get a picture of that gang over there. They'll ruin your camera, but get it anyway. Then," he added, "make each one of them autograph ~~it~~."

intervened. Then the war was followed by the great solar eclipse of Nineteen Nineteen, and that gave the opportunity to test the Einstein theory. It was found that -- yes, stars near the sun were out

EINSTEIN

At Princeton it was announced today that Professor Albert Einstein has completed a new theory -- to add to his famous "Relativity". Nearly half a century ago, when he was in his twenties, Einstein devised the theory of "Relativity" -- which revolutionized modern physics. Now he is seventy, and brings forth a new mathematical doctrine, just a revolutionary -- according to the announcement at Princeton.

It is called "A Generalized Theory of Gravitation" and is all wrapped up in bewildering symbols of algebra. Einstein is said to have discovered a general law, a set of equations, to unify gravitation and electro-magnetism. Which recalls the case of his previous theory of Relativity -- and a turn of drama which made that complicated mathematical stickler so famous.

Einstein Relativity predicted that, because of the gravitational field of the sun, the stars near the sun would be displaced at the time of a total eclipse. Are you still with me? Well - The First World War

Sir Isaac Newton worked out mathematics for gravitation, and the great Faraday showed how magnetism works. So now we hear that Einstein has mathematics to show that they are both fundamentally the same.

But Einstein gives warning -- that he has, as yet, no experimental proof of his "Generalized Theory of Gravitation." Which ^{re}calls the case of his previous theory of Relativity -- and a turn of drama which made that complicated mathematical stickler so famous. ~~That was a case of -- experiment, observation, astronomy.~~

Einstein Relativity predicted that, because of the gravitational field of the sun, the stars near the sun would be displaced at the time of a total eclipse.

are you still with me? Well --

The First World War intervened, ~~then~~ the war was followed by the great solar eclipse of ^{NINETEEN} ~~Nineteen Eighteen~~, and that gave the opportunity to test the Einstein theory.

It was found that -- yes, stars near the sun were out

of their usual position during the eclipse. That was
spectacular proof and a scientific headline. Added to
which was the fact that the Einstein theory was so
incomprehensible that it ~~satisfied~~^{tickled} the public fancy,
made people laugh.

Now we have another Einstein theory, which
also waits for experimental proof. -- But it is unlikely
~~that~~ there will be anything so spectacular as that
eclipse and the sudden, surprising vogue of Einstein
Relativity.

EINSTEIN

At Princeton it was announced today that Professor Albert Einstein has completed a new theory -- to add to his famous "Relativity". ~~He has worked out mathematics intended to explain the basic secret of nature.~~ Nearly half a century ago, when he was in his twenties, ^{Einstein} ~~he~~ devised the theory of "Relativity" -- which revolutionized modern physics. Now he is seventy, and brings forth a new mathematical doctrine, just as revolutionary -- according to the announcement at Princeton.

It is called "A Generalized Theory of Gravitation" and is all wrapped up in ~~the most~~ bewildering symbols of algebra. ~~The general idea is simple~~ Einstein is said to have discovered a general law, a set of equations, to unify gravitation and electro-magnetism. ~~These are~~ regarded as the fundamental forces in the universe, and everybody knows something about them. ^{that} The earth attracts things -- gravitation. A magnet attracts things. ~~But the~~ ~~two forces are quite~~ different -- a contrast.

FUGITIVE

In the state of Washington -- a regular seige today, when a Posse found a fugitive in the guise of a football player ready for the big game.

Wayne O'Dell, wanted in a shot-gun killding, hid in a local school, empty over the Christmas holidays. Nobody thought of looking in the school, not at first. It was a good place to hide -- except that it was cold. So the fugitive rumaged in the athletic lockers -- and when they spotted him, he had on a pair of well-padded football pants. Like a fast-running ball carrier, and he did some fast running -- getting into a house nearby, and hiding -- the owners not being home. But a posse found him there, surrounded the place. Shots were fired, tear gas bombs were tossed -- and then it was like a football player weeping.

FUGITIVES

Texas reports a prison break, in which seven fugitives dug an escape tunnel at the Huntsville Penitentiary. The land there is a sandy soil, and through this the prisoners managed to burrow for twenty-five feet, digging their way under the penitentiary wall. Later, on the highway, four jumped aboard a moving truck, the driver of which jumped out. The fugitives took his place, and kept going -- a manhunt on tonight.

The latest -- two of the fugitives have been captured, trailed by bloodhounds.

HEROINE

At Hyndman, Pennsylvania, Mrs. Helen Turner, twenty-two years old, is saying -- "I am no heroine." Which only gets her into an argument with the neighbors -- who say she is. There was a Christmas tree fire, and the town of Hyndman was about to burn down, the whole business section ablaze. It seemed as if everybody's home would go too -- except for Mrs. Helen Turner.

She's the ^(town) ~~xxx~~ telephone operator, and was away from home for Christmas, with her husband and three-year-old daughter -- when the fire broke out. She immediately hurried back, driving twenty miles, took her place at her switchboard to send the alarm far and wide, calling fire companies from surrounding towns, and summoning medical aid.

It was early this morning, and the electric wires were down, ~~xxx~~ so she used a flashlight, moving the beam around on her telephone board as she plugged in numbers

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and made calls. The town was burning down around her as she worked, the flames crackling to within thirty feet of where she sat. Firemen were carrying out the furniture of ^{the actual} the room -- to save that much.

The telephone operator stuck to her job. Today she said: "Frankly, I didn't even notice the flames were so close." So she only shakes her head-- as the town calls her a heroine.

BEST-DRESSED WOMAN

There is novelty in this year's choice of the best-dressed woman for 1949. In the past the favorites ~~for~~ *— of that award —* that award have been the Duchess of Windsor and Mrs. Harrison Williams. This year the prize goes to Mrs. Barbara Cushing Mortimer Paley -- wife of William Paley, President of C.B.S.

She is the mother of three small children, and is expecting a fourth. The novelty of the award lies in the fact that the principle article of her stylish ~~ward~~ wardrobe is -- "a pink maternity coat."

Well, there is nothing novel in maternity -- it has been going on for a long time. But, when you think of the glass of ~~f~~ fashion and the frills and frivolities of the mode, your imagination goes to cocktail dresses with *— is that right? —* bouffant skirts or an evening gown with a plunging neckline. But this time it's -- a maternity coat. Nature taking its course -- ~~even~~ even in the world of fashion.

MUSICAL PORTRAITS

Nelson, will you please get the music all fixed up -- because now we have something tuneful. In Hollywood an inspiration was had by a band conductor named Frank Devol. Spelled -- D-E-V-O-L. If you make the "O" sound like an "I" it is not correct. Anyway, this band conducting-Devol is producing ~~a~~ musical portraits of Hollywood stars. For example, when he gets around to Betty Grable, he plays her portrait on the oboe with its slightly wailing appeal, "Oh boy, the oboe!" Rita Hayworth is pictured with drums, castanets and tambourines. Allee-oop!

Linda Darnell is dreamy -- so she is expressed by the soaring melody of the violins. And listen, Nelson, don't tell me about some movie actress you know, whose music is also to be played on the violin -- the G-string. ~~on~~ This band conductor, Devol ran into trouble when he tried a musical portrait of Ingrid ~~Bergman~~ ^{Bergman} -- he tried to

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picture ~~the~~ her Swedish emotions with one single instrument. He tried two and three, then half a dozen.

"But," says musical Devol in tense and soulful tones, "Nothing was deep enough or passionate enough -- and finally I used the whole orchestra." Which, I suppose, is a musical way of saying -- she's got everything, from the base drum to the piccolo. After which, Nelson, let's have a musical portrait of Ivory.