

SYRIA

C.T. - P. & S. Monday, Dec. 19, 1949.

All is quiet in Damascus tonight - after another coup d'etat. The government of Syria was overthrown today by an army revolt - military conspirators, in a sudden seizure of power. Moving swiftly and secretly, they occupied public buildings, and arrested the army chief-of-staff, together with ministers of the government and leaders of Parliament. The purpose - to prevent the union of ~~with~~ the Republic of Syria with the kingdom of Iraq.

This was the third military coup d'etat in Syria in the last eight and a half months, and in each of the three the same personalities were involved. Last March, the government was overthrown by a military triumvirate, three army chiefs named Zaim, Hinnouai and Chichakli. Zaim was made president, and presently assumed the powers of a dictator. In doing so, he ~~fast~~ fell out with his two fellow conspirators, Hinnouai and Chichakli. So they staged a revolt, overthrew Zaim, and immediately had him shot as a traitor, together with his premier.

Whereupon they installed a parliamentary government, and Hinnouai became chief-of-staff - he's the one ~~xxxxxx~~ arrested today. By whom? By Chichakli, the third member of the one-time triumvirate. He calls his former partner a traitor, and says he will be, not executed, but banished - together with others of the government.

The trouble concerns a long time plan to unite the ~~three~~ Arab countries of Syria and Iraq. On Saturday a legislative committee ^{in Damascus} ~~approved~~ of a bill for closer cooperation, and ~~the~~ resolution for unity would have been taken up by the Syrian parliament this afternoon. But that's all off now - (because Chichakli, lined up with factions of Republicans and Mohammedan Socialists, is against any union of Syria and Iraq, and has ~~th~~ overthrown the government.)

CHINA

Surprise news from China ^{(where} Nationalist forces have recaptured Kunming. This would sound like a striking military success, Kunming being the capital of the important southern province of Yunnan. ^R During the Second World War, the city was a big American base for the airline across the Himalayas, over the Hump. But, actually, the Nationalist victory was not won in battle against the Communists. It was, instead, a success in the old Chinese game of intrigue. The province of Yunnan was turned over to the Reds by its traitor Governor, Lu-Han -- he playing the familiar part of the turn-coat war lord. The Nationalists made every effort to keep Lu-Han faithful -- but he, with his eye on the winning side, arrested the Nationalist general, and declared for Communism. Actually, the Red forces had not moved into Yunnan in any strength - and the Nationalists' recapture of Kunming is

merely a defeat of the faithless Governor, Lu-Han. *I knew Lu-Han, during the war - in Kunming. Sunken cheeks, deep sunken eyes, from smoking opium.*

any rate The Nationalist force moved quickly, and at last reports Lu-Han was fleeing frantically to the western

- towards Tibet -

wilderness of the province, - and calling frantically on the Communists for aid. It is doubtful how much the success of the Nationalists at Kunming will mean - when the hordes of the Reds get moving.

~~Moreover, the news is balanced off by Communist claims of another big victory in western China, where the Communist army after having captured the city of Cheng-tu, is said to have broken through the remnants of opposition forces, splitting the remaining Nationalist army in two.~~

BULGARIA

Tonight brings ~~the~~ election returns from Bulgaria -- in which Red country they have been having the usual totalitarian parody of a nation going to the polls. The victory for the Communist government is by a majority so overwhelming you can hardly find any minority at all-- ~~ninety-seven-and-sixty-six-one-hundredths~~ percent. Four million, six hundred thousand to a mere one-hundred-and-ten-thousand. There was no opposition ticket, of course. A few people brave enough to vote against the government had their choice of casting a blank ballot, or if they could mark an opposition slogan on the ballot. Such as, for example, "Down with Communism." Mighty few tried that sort of experiment. So tonight the Reds are hailing the election as a great victory.

ARMAMENT

A new sweeping defense arrangement between the United States, Great Britain and Canada - with an announcement made simultaneously in the three capitals, Washington, London and Ottawa. It's an agreement for the standardization of armament, military equipment, and the training of defense forces. The three countries are to have the same types of armed power, interchangeable, standardized.

This is being done under the North Atlantic Security Pact, and ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ corresponds to the state of affairs behind the Iron Curtain, where the Soviets and their satellites have a program for standardizing their armament and military training.

FOLLOW ARMAMENT

The latest -- an announcement in Washington that, eventually, all the countries that signed the North Atlantic Pact will be asked to join a pool of armament manufacture. That is, each nation, will be assigned to turn out ^{the} weapons it is best fitted to make. For example, Britain might get the job of producing fighter planes-- the British being well-advanced along that line. The United States would take over the heavy, longrange bombers. ^π The atomic bomb? That would still remain the American specialty.

DENFELD

Admiral Denfeld refuses the appointment of American Naval Commander in Europe. This was disclosed in Washington today, where the Admiral's decision was received in a letter to Navy Secretary Matthews. The reason - Denfeld's belief that he would be handicapped by loss of prestige, because of the way he was ousted as Chief of Naval Operations. He played his part in the "revolt of the admirals" against unification, and thinks the summary way in which he was dismissed would do him no good in dealings with naval

officials abroad. ~~part of the job of commander over there~~

~~being to deal with navies of Western European countries, and~~

~~they, in the words of the Admiral, "might not have the~~

~~necessary respect for, and confidence in, me."~~ He intimates,

however, that he might be willing to stay in the Navy if some other suitable post could be found for him. In other words, he has not yet made up his mind about resigning.

C.I.O.

A trial began in Washington today. The court - a C.I.O. ~~Union~~ Committee. The defendant - a labor ^{union.} ~~organization.~~ The CIO has placed on trial the organization of Office and Professional Workers - on the charge of Communist domination. The Union has a membership of thirty thousand, mostly office workers in the New York area. Its leadership has long been denounced as consisting of Reds following the party line - and the trial is part of the drive of the CIO to expel Unions dominated by ^{(Communists.} ~~Reds.~~ Ten other of their alleged Left Wing Unions are similarly to face the same kind of court - a three-man committee consisting of members of the Executive Board of the CIO.

Later news:- the CIO today entered suit against the United Office and Professional Workers Union for eighteen thousand, seven hundred dollars, which that Union is said to have borrowed from the ~~the~~ CIO treasury.

BLIZZARD

In the western states blizzards are bringing a reminiscence of last year, when they swept in around Christmas time and provided stupendous fantasies of snow. Just looking back at what we saw in those western blizzards is enough to dazzle the eyes. Today great snow storms swept over the inner mountain area, and transcontinental highways were blocked by mountainous drifts. The snow storm region at its worst from the middle of Idaho to southern Utah.

(Across the Atlantic -- Scotland had the worst windstorm in forty years today.) The gale blew at eighty miles an hour, and ships had a hard time of it. In one harbor of western Scotland thirty fishing boats were blown loose from their moorings, and hurled ashore.)

JELLYFISH

From Australia comes a terrifying story - attacked by a jellyfish. When you think of the perils of swimming in the ocean, you imagine the menace of sharks, baracuda, and the giant octopus, with slithering grasping tenacles. But who'd be afraid of a jellyfish? Well, you would - in southern waters. As is illustrated by the story of terror from Australia.

In the surf at Brisbane, a ten year old boy was swimming, when a jeelyfish wound itself around one of his legs. In those waters they have a giant kind of the squashy, slimy thing, which they call - the sea wasp. The boy's father saw what was happening, and beat frantically at the jeelyfish, which thereupon let go and slid away. But that did not save the boy - for the sea wasp has its name because of its deadly sting, its poison. The victim died shortly after being taken to a hospital - the word being that few people ever survive the poison of this giant je^llyfish, the sting of the sea wasp.

ITALY - DOGS

From the ancient Italian city of Milan, comes news of a wild, uproarious disturbance. - ~~and a dog-gone affair it was.~~ Not Communists in a riot, but dogs. In the great square of the Duomo, the Cathedral of Milan, a thousand ^{dogs} ~~dogs~~ staged a sort of ^{canine} ~~of~~ revolution - in a pandemonium of barking, yelping, howling. They battled the police - as if the government were ~~going to the~~ ^{going to the} ~~were going to~~ ^{were going to} ~~about taxes overturned by~~ the dogs.

It all came about because the city administration boosted the price of licenses. The dog owners were indignant, and organized a demonstration - and, with an Italian sense of the dramatic, they took their dogs with them, for a mass rally in the square of the Cathedral. This was against the law, and jeeploads of police came speeding. But when they tried to break up the crowd - did the crowd resist? Yes, in a way - they sicked the dogs on the police.

So the battle was on, the Milanese cops ^{were} assailed by ~~thousand~~ ^{thousands} canines of every description, large and small, hounds and terriers, St. Bernards and Pekingese. Today's

dispatch states grimly: "Policemen were taken to a hospital
for injections against rabies." ~~The police beat~~ The cops

then
in a revolution of the dogs.

BURGLARS

In Michigan, the police are looking for - the "hungry burgars." And one clue is - the stealing of shoes. Hunger and footwear do not seem to go together, you don't eat shoes. But it's this way.

For weeks there was an epidemic of burg^lar^yies in Michigan towns - by crooks who specialized in robbing restaurants. Breaking into a dining place after closing hours, they'd not only steal the cash, but would also sit down and have something to eat. Hence they were called - the "hungry burglars."

The police got onto the gang, and last ^(week) ~~night~~ two of the "hungry burglars" were sentenced to prison terms for twenty-seven robberies. Stealing plenty, and eating plenty. They were taken to a jail at Ionia, Michigan, where the sheriff was putting them into a cell, when suddenly the two "hungry burglars" made a fast move, pushed the sheriff into the cell, slammed the door, and locked him in. They made a clean getaway, impeded by only one fact. They were in their

stocking feet, no shoes on. Well, you can't travel far without shoes - and shortly afterward a sporting goods store was robbed, a rifle and ammunition swiped, also a couple of pairs of shoes. Which accounts for the paradoxical clue of "hungry burglars" stealing shoes.

CORNELL

At Cornell, the authorities of the University have put the kibosh on two college fraternities. The reason - a peculiar aspect of academic studies. The two, ~~xxx~~, now in the scholastic doghouse, are - "drinking fraternities." Over the weekend they had an initiation ceremony, and today the report from the hospital is that the victim will survive. ^{Although he} ~~is~~ was unconscious for fifteen hours.

Drinking clubs are an old story in the history of institutions of learning - "drink to dear old Siwash!" But the initiation they had at Cornell would seem to be going a little too far, or rather - too full. The student, now in the hospital, was required to drink a quart of martinis, bottoms up. He did, and it's no wonder he was unconscious for fifteen hours. Moreover, the hospital reports that he was also treated for lacerations of the head. That's how hard he fell. ^P ~~But~~ He's okay tonight. But the two drinking fraternities are not - today stricken from the list of authorized university organizations. ~~What they seem to need is - a milk and lemonade club.~~

PREACHER

Down in Oklahoma, they're mixing religion and politics. Which is a mighty fine thing, according to the Reverend William Alexander of Oklahoma City - who is thinking about running for the Senate. Mixing Sunday morning sermons with senatorial oratory. The parson's idea is to enter the Democratic primaries against veteran Senator Elmer Thomas, who seeks reelection. ~~Why~~ ~~Senator Thomas said he'd welcome the entrance of the preacher into politics. "It would," said he, "liven up the race and draw some crowds."~~

~~Probably would, because~~ The Reverend William Alexander used to be a jazz band leader in night clubs - before he started expounding the Gospel. At seventeen, he had his own group of musicians, and played the hot spots for several years. Today he is the pastor of one of the biggest churches in Oklahoma City, the First Christian - and he is famous for his fiery sermons.

If he becomes a Senator, he'd still be a preacher - he's got that all fixed up. His church members

have given their permission for him to go into the political campaign - providing he stays on as their pastor, even if elected to the Senate. In which case he would commute between Washington and Oklahoma City every Sunday - so as to hold the regular service and preach the sermon.

Sounds like an interesting idea - but suppose he should get mixed up. Suppose that, in the Senate, he should forget himself and preach a hell-fire sermon on sin. Or, at Sunday church service in Oklahoma City - start a debate on the budget figures for the next fiscal year. Well, it might not be a bad idea - especially giving the Senate a hell-fire sermon on sin. Nelson,

4 What do we get from you - a sermon?