

VINSON

F.S. Luroco - ~~Monday~~ ^{Monday} June 24, 1946

I don't know, but I suspect today's big ceremony ^{here in}
Washington has a bearing on ^{that} a feud in the Supreme Court. One
might surmise that, with Justices Jackson and Black engaged in
a personal battle, President Truman thought it might be a good
idea to have a symbolic reaffirmation of the dignity of the
High Tribunal. ^R Anyway, ^(precedent) ~~was~~ was broken today in the swearing
in of Chief Justice Vinson. Hitherto Chief Justices have taken
the oath ~~in~~ in the Supreme Court Building; but today the ritual
was enacted on the White House lawn -- with all the pomp and
ceremony that attends the ⁱnauguration of a President. Nearly
five thousand people, including the highest ~~and~~ dignitaries of
Government, witnessed the administration of the oath, and a
Navy band played stirring tunes -- as this nation ~~is~~ today
acquired its thirteenth Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

In Washington tonight, a joint committee of the Senate and the House of Representatives is ⁱⁿ making another try, though *---another try to work out* it seems like an impossible task -- [^] a joint agreement on the subject of the O P A. The Senate passed a bill, and so did the house, *The* Senate measure being severer on the O P A than the House version, *They* have been trying for a compromise ~~by~~ but haven't succeeded; and today Senator Taft stated that, unless there is an agreement tonight, there ~~will~~ will be no chance of breaking the deadlock. He intimated, moreover, that there was little likelihood of an agreement tonight -- in which case the ~~at~~ whole O P A business will be referred back to the Senate and the House of Representatives for new consideration.

This deadlock is accompanied by the food shortage, especially the meat shortage, which *we* all know about only too well. And the commonest explanation is, that supplies of meat are being held up until there is some decision about O P A price control -- a decision on what's going to happen to the price of meat. *Meat that seems to be non-existent here in Washington!*

PALESTINE

A trial began in Jerusalem today. This is an era of trials, ponderous proceedings in international court rooms. The trial in Jerusalem is not so grandiose, with accent on world justice, but in many ways it is more vivid with dramatic meanings. Well, Jerusalem has a tradition for trials, as is attested ~~simply~~ by the Bible -- including that trial nearly two thousand years ago presided over by a Roman ^{who sat in judgement} ~~magistrate~~ named Pontius Pilot.

¶ In the ancient city of Zion thirty defendants were brought before the court today, thirty members of that extremist movement of Jewish resistance called -- Irgun Zvai Leumi. ^{None} ~~Many~~ of them, ^{save} ~~one~~ their leader, was more than twenty four years old. The tribunal they faced was a British military court. The charge against them is illegal possession of deadly weapons. And that is punishable by death, under the severe laws enacted by the British to curb the disorders in the Holy Land. [¶] The thirty members of the Irgun extremist group were carrying out military exercises near Jaffa when they were spotted by a British scouting plane. Soldiers on the ground rounded them up and seized machine guns, automatic rifles, ~~mm~~ pistols, and other weapons. And now the band of youths of Irgun Zvai Leumi are on trial for their lives.

Today in court, clad in khaki uniforms, they entoned verses in Hebrew, verses from the Psalms of David. And their leader was heard to mutter: "Through blood and fire shall Judea arise".

This in itself was court room drama. But behind it was a turn of story -- grim and ominous in menace. In the mind of everyone in the court room were the figures of three British officers -- hostages who are being held by that same Extremist organization -- Irgun Zvai Leumi of which the thirty youths on trial are members. And the threat of the Irgun group is that the hostages will be killed -- if any member of Irgun Zvai is executed.

There were six hostages to begin with. One escaped, and two were released. These two reveal that they were kept prisoner in a basement ~~at~~ in the near vicinity of the place *where* they were seized, in the Jewish city of Tel Aviv. The British made a desperate search of Tel Aviv, trying to recover the hostages -- but never found the two in the basement so nearby. The two officers tell how they heard the trucks and searching parties pass only a few feet from them.

The tenseness of the story becomes complete with the news today that the Irgun Zvai Leumi has defied a deadline -- a deadline set by the official Jewish underground Army Hagana. There is a rift in the Jewish underground. Hagana ^{much} ~~is~~ more moderate, is opposed to the seizing of hostages, and gave word that the British officers held by the more extreme group must be released. Time limit was set. That time limit was today, but the prisoners were not released. Instead, the secret radio of Irgun Zvai Leumi announced that they would still be held -- always with that background threat ~~is~~ of killing them if any of the Irgun group are executed. And ~~is~~ that coincided with the beginning of the trial today -- thirty Irgun members on trial for their lives.

INDIA

In India the Nationalists have turned town the British proposal for an interim government -- a regime to run things while a constitution was being fixed up. The India Nationalist Conference acted on the advice of Ghandi. The interim scheme was ~~known~~ drawn up by Viceroy Lord Wavell and it appears that ^{even} the delegation of London Cabinet Members negotiating ~~with~~ out in India, agreed with the Nationalists, in objecting to some points in the Wavell Interim ~~arrangement~~ ^{(arrangement,} ~~arrangement~~ ⁾. They couldn't do anything about it and we hear they ~~are~~ are going home to report to the London government. ^R The probability is that a new scheme for an interim regime in India will be drawn up in London.

CHINA

In China there is a new uproar, because of an incident that occurred to agitate things -- just as the negotiations between the Chiang Kai Shek Government and the Communists appeared to have reached a new and hopeful stage -- prospects looking good for a settlement. I don't know how seriously this latest bit of trouble will affect the harmony of the negotiations, but it was a most ^{unseemly} ~~unpleasant~~ affair -- when a peace delegation, which included two of China's prominent educators were beaten up and robbed in Nanking. They were from Shanghai, and called themselves -- "Non-Partisan Peace Makers". The assault and robbery was committed in the Shanghai railroad station when they arrived. The railroad station was thronged and a big crowd saw what happened. Did the multitude intervene? Not at all. They cheered and applauded the gang that was assailing and plundering the Non-Partisan Peace Makers.

Communists are blaming the outrage on reactionaries of the Nationalist Party, these claiming that the non-partisan delegation was really pro-Communist.

To make the incident the more vivid, the peace makers left Shanghai amid a pandemonium of cheering, twenty five thousand

people acclaiming them. Then, when they got to Nanking, they were beaten up and robbed -- while thousands cheered.

some of the thorniest questions of dispute between Soviet Russia and the Western Democracies. And, right away the foreign ministers got into a dispute over that familiar argument -- the free navigation of the Dardanelles.

They took up the Balkan Question today, after being unable to get anywhere on the subject of a peace pact with Italy. They didn't venture to mention the ugly Italian war problem, Trieste. Today they rarely talked about other matters -- like the disposition of the Italian fleet. But they got deadlocked on that too -- which made them decide to go to the Balkans, and even more difficult areas of international dispute.

FOREIGN MINISTERS

In Paris the Foreign Ministers late today got around to the question of peace treaties in the Balkans. These provide some of the thorniest questions of dispute between Soviet Russia and the Western Democracies. And, right away the Foreign Ministers ran into ~~another~~^a snag, that familiar argument -- the free navigation of the Danube.

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SECURITY COUNCIL

At the Security Council of the United Nations in New York, Polish Delegate Oscar Lange called upon all the members of the United Nations to sever diplomatic relations with Franco Spain. Which brings the Franco issue once again to the foreground.

We recall how last week the Security Council voted a compromise in the Franco matter, ^{but} ~~the~~ Soviet Russia, intervened with a veto. That killed the compromise, and now Poland, which is under Soviet domination, comes forward with a demand for the action against Franco, which the Security Council turned down -- only to be vetoed. If the Council were to accept today's Polish demand, it would be reversing itself. Or rather, the

Council would let itself be reversed -- by the Soviet veto. *The latest: - the Council has turned it down, consequently, the ~~expectation is~~ ~~that the Council will vote~~ voting against the Polish proposal by 7 to 4. ~~is now~~ ~~being~~ little more than ~~an office~~ Soviet side show.* ~~And so, the Franco business~~ ^{is} ~~will be~~ just where it started -- nowhere.

ATOMIC

The likelihood of an international agreement on the atomic bomb becomes dimmer today with an atomic journalistic bomb hurled in Moscow -- by Pravda, the newspaper of the Communist Party. This adds harshly spoken emphasis to the virtual turn-down given by Soviet Delegate Gromyko -- when he, instead of discussing the American proposal presented by Bernard Baruch countered by offering a plan of his own. The Soviet scheme that Gromyko handed to the atomic Energy Commission of the United Nations reflected two principal points in the Baruch program. One, the American intention to retain all atomic bombs and secrets until a system of international control ~~is~~ in effective operation; and secondly, the American contention that there should be no atomic veto.

Today in Moscow Pravda assailed the Baruch plan as an an American attempt to establish what Pravda called -- "world domination". That Soviet newspaper, which speaks for the Communist party in Russia, bitterly assails the American refusal to give up its atomic bombs and secrets right away. The Soviet argument is that America by insisting on retaining its atomic power until international control is a going concern, schemes

for control of the atomic bomb

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to use that atomic power to dominate the world.

And Pravda applies the finishing touch by denouncing the American refusal to have any veto.

The replica of the atomic bomb, a missile filled with black powder, was dropped just as the real thing is to be buried in the spectacular test designed to awe the world. Everything was according to the program that will be used when Operation Greenhouse comes to its climax. All the ships were in position on the ledge of the bay, and the forty-two thousand people that they were placed as they will be next Sunday.

The B-29 assigned to drop the dummy bomb was about to take off from Kwajalein, one man of its ground crew walked into one of its propellers and was killed. Then, when the Super Fortress did take off, it ran into foul weather. Seventy five planes were in the air, releasing and their part in the test. The photographic planes had their trouble, were forced to turn back -- as the B-29, with its dummy bomb, flew to Bikini, through blinding clouds. There was still another twist of bad luck. In the Super Fortress the radar failed to work, and

CROSSROADS

The success of the dress rehearsal at Bikini today was accomplished in spite of a streak of bad luck -- as if fickle fortune were determined to spoil the show, the preview. The replica of the atomic bomb, a missile filled with flash powder, was dropped just as the real thing is to be hurled in the spectacular test designed to make history. Everything was according to the program that will be staged when Operation Crossroads comes to its climax. All the ships were ⁱⁿ position on the lagoon of Bⁱkini, and the forty-two thousand ^{odd} people out there were placed as they will be next Monday.

^{then} And the bad luck began -- tragedy at the take-off.

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the course to ~~Bakini~~ had to be flown largely by instinct. However, the B-29 got there, and then had to make three runs over the target. On the first two runs cloud conditions were so bad that the Bombardier couldn't spot the point at which he was to aim. Then, the third time there was an opening in the clouds and the dummy was dropped. This part of it was perfect. The missile loaded with flash powder burst at the right distance above the water between ^{the} Battleship Nevada and the Aircraft Carrier Independence -- these two ^{being} the key vessels among the stores of craft in the lagoon. The flash powder went off with a bright blaze -- duplicating ^{to some extent} ~~in every respect~~ the blast that is planned for next Monday. Duplicating, that is, except for size -- today's flash of explosive being the tiniest of sparks compared to the hurricane of elemental fires of the atomic bomb.

QUAKE

Studies today indicated that yesterday's earthquake on the Pacific Coast was more of a benefit than a misfortune. The Seismologists have placed the shock accurately, and find that it occurred some two hundred miles out to sea from Vancouver. There the floor of the ocean has what the geologists call -- a fault. Deep down the rocks may slide, adjusting themselves -- and that's what happened yesterday, a sliding of the rock at a great depth below the ocean bed. It was a minor adjustment -- and if it hadn't happened, pressures might have been built up for a tremendous shock, a devastating earthquake.

A final check shows that only one life was lost. A sixty three year old man was walking along a street in Seattle -- when up ahead, he saw a tall building shake and sway. This frightened him so badly that he had a heart attack. In many places people fled, when the shocks occurred -- the fastest fleeing being accomplished at a copper smelter, at Tacoma, Washington. Workers were ^{on} the job when huge vats of sulphuric acid started to sway, ~~xx~~ and sheets of the fiery chemical splashed out. It looked as if the giant vats of sulphuric acid might turn over, so no wonder the workers fled -- at record-breaking speed.

TP And now with just enough speed, I hope, Hugh, we'll switch back to you in New York.

in New York.