

JAPAN

75 - Sum & P. B. - mm. Dec. 23, 1946

Here is the latest on that earthquake and tidal wave in Japan: One thousand and eighty-eight dead; one hundred and sixty five missing and one thousand and one hundred forty two injured.

These are by no means the final figures: A Japanese news agency reports that the total number of dead may run much higher.

Relief squads so far have been unable to reach two entire prefectures. The roads leading to the two principal devastated regions are still blocked.

CHRISTMAS

Tonight we have a Christmas message from the experts of the National Safety Council. Our days of merriment are spoiled in thousands of homes every year by accidents. Actuary figures show that there are casualties during the last two weeks of every year in at least twenty-two thousand American homes, casualties which cause death or permanent disability. Accidents of a less grave nature are still more numerous.

What causes these accidents? Holiday trips, heavy travel, slippery streets, so many pedestrians in the streets shopping, and, in the words of the National Safety Council, "imprudent celebration with the festive spirit often overcoming common sense." Says the President of the Council: "It is a pity to be hanging crepe at a time when we should be hanging nothing but holly and mistletoe."

ULTIMATUM

We now have official information ^{concerning} ~~of~~ the
circumstances ^{under} ~~in~~ which a vessel of Uncle Sam's Navy was
chased out of the Chinese port of Dairen by Soviet Military
authorities, on December Twentieth, under a twenty
minute ultimatum.

The ship, flying the ^{American flag} ~~Star Spangled Banner~~, was
a landing craft, which had been sent to Dairen on a
courier mission. She carried diplomatic mail and supplies
to the staff of Uncle Sam's Consulate. On board also were
two newspapermen by permission of Admiral Cook, Commander
of the Seventh Fleet, also the agent of an American Oil
Company who had full clearance from the authorities of
the United States Government. She arrived at Dairen
December Eighteenth, and requested permission to remain
in port forty-eight hours. Nominally, of course, Dairen
belongs to China. Actually, ^{it's} ~~the place~~ is occupied by the
Red Army ^{-and} under the strictest ~~kind of~~ martial law. ~~The~~
~~Chinese mayor of the town has nothing to say, because he~~
~~is not allowed to~~

The Soviet Military Authorities grudgingly

assented to the ship's remaining at anchorage for forty-eight hours, but would not permit either the newspapermen of the American business man to land. Only the Commander of the ship and the diplomatic courier went ashore and visited the American consulate general. ^{TP} The Consul General tried to appeal to the Soviet Military Commander, who refused to see him. When Consul General Benninghoff went to the Russian Commander's home, he was forced to stand for several hours in the street in a bitterly cold wind. Presently, a sentry came out and informed him that General Korshanof would not see him. ~~Then~~ *Then our Consul General* ~~was after Benninghoff had~~ called on the Russian Consul General asking the reason for such behavior. The Russian *civilian official replied* ~~replied~~ that it was up to the General. No American may land at this Chinese port without permission from Moscow. Altogether, the Russians peremptorily snubbed ^{*the American*} ~~our~~ Consul General three times.

While the Commander of Uncle Sam's Ship and the Military Courier were with the Consulate General, a Red Army Major, who said he represented General Korzhanof,

ordered the ship to leave within twenty minutes, or take the consequences, although the Commanding Officer of the American ship was not aboard.

The friendly Russians whom we treat as Allies and friends and give full freedom in this country!

Not very pleasant news that. Perhaps in that part of Soviet Territory they haven't heard that we fought together in the recent war and that the nations of the world are now trying getting along with one another.

And as long

SAAR

The French today showed how much they are in earnest in their determination to secure control of the Saar District. *Not just for the time being, but* for good and all. The Military Commander of the French Zone of Occupied Germany today posted twelve hundred French customs guards around the border of the Saar, ~~to~~ [^] to cut it off completely from Germany.

Officially, the French authorities explain that the idea is to stop the black market of food and money ^P into the Rhenish Palatinate and Baden. The French Delegate to the United Nations notified the Big Four Foreign Ministers last week that this was going to be done. But the explanation doesn't fool anybody. ~~although~~ The British Foreign Office accepts it. *And, as long* ~~as a matter of fact, as long~~ ago as last October, British Foreign Secretary Bevin said publicly that the British government is perfectly agreeable to the formation of a customs union between France and the Saar.

More trouble ahead for British Foreign Secretary Bevin. The rebellious members of his own party refuse to be appeased. Though Bevin made a vigorous ~~speech~~ speech defending his foreign policy in reporting on the Big Four meeting in New York, the anti-Bevin Labor Members say they want to be shown that Bevin is really holding ~~th~~ the middle-of-the-way course, midway between Uncle Sam and Soviet Russia. In fact they look upon the Attlee Government with suspicion. So says an English labor leader named Konni Zilliacus, who is their principal spokesman. This Zilliacus intimates that Bevin is offering them words in place of deeds.

The group he speaks for includes 50 odd labor members of Parliament. Small as their number is, they are exceedingly vocal and capable of making trouble.

GREECE

A ship carrying ammunition for the Greek Army was on its way to Volos, thirty-five miles to the southeast of Larissa. Just as she reached the mouth of the harbor, she struck a magnetic mine and blew up. As a result, the entrance to the harbor is completely blocked. This will make it difficult for the government at Athens to prosecute operations against the strong guerrilla forces in the Larissa Region.

SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court of the United States today granted a petition made by the lawyers for John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers. On January Fourteenth, the nine Justices will hear arguments from Counsel not only on the three million ^{dollar and the} ~~five hundred and~~ ten thousand dollar fines imposed by Judge Goldsborough, but also upon the anti-strike injunction ~~that~~ the Judge issued.

This is considered a minor legal victory for Lewis and the coal men. It means the court will decide whether the Norris-LaGuardia Act forbidding injunctions in industrial disputes, ~~it~~ applies also when a union calls a strike against an industry which has been seized by the government.

SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court of the United States today granted a petition made by the lawyers for John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers. On January Fourteenth, the nine Justices will hear arguments from Counsel not only on the three million ^{dollar and the} ~~five hundred and~~ ten thousand dollar fines imposed by Judge Goldsborough, but also upon the anti-strike injunction ~~that~~ the Judge issued.

This is considered a minor legal victory for Lewis and the coal men. It means the court will decide whether the Norris-LaGuardia Act forbidding injunctions in industrial disputes, ~~xxx~~ applies also when a union calls a strike against an industry which has been seized by the government.

TAFT

Senator Taft of Ohio let it be known today that he is going to ~~ask for~~ ^{ask for} the job of Chairman of the Senate's Committee on Labor. The inside interpretation of that move is that the gentleman from Ohio is in the running for the Presidential nomination in 'forty-eight, although he hasn't ~~admitted~~ ^{The Labor Committee} admitted it. ~~That~~ ^{The Labor Committee} Chairmanship would ~~give~~ ^{of course} get him powerful influence in shaping the labor laws to be passed by the Eightieth Congress. Republican Leaders have told us that new labor laws will be corrective, ~~but~~ not punitive. If they turn out to be mild enough not to ~~be~~ get labor's back up, the man responsible will have strong support at the Nineteen Forty-Eighth Convention.

The son of the twenty-seventh President of the United States is surely asking for plenty of work during the next two years. Even if he wins out in his fight for the labor chairmanship, he will continue to be a member of the Finance Committee. Either of these is ~~fix~~ a full job.

Since he wants that labor Chairmanship, he will probably get it by right of seniority. Some Republicans

had hoped that it would go to Senator George Aiken of Vermont, who has been friendly to labor. However, he has been in the ~~Senate~~ Senate two years less than Taft. Furthermore, he recently wrote Taft that he would support him for whatever Chairmanship he wants.

TRUMAN

The first of the season's Christmas parties was held in the White House with the great white father as Santa Claus. The guests were employees of the White House, five hundred of them. I never realized it took so many people to run the national Executive Mansion. They included cooks, butlers, maids, chauffeurs, secretaries, doormen, secret service men: each of them got the same present, a picture of the President and Mrs. Truman, boarding an airplane bound and autographed. With that went a handshake and a "A Merry Christmas."

This party was a preliminary. Tomorrow at dusk Mr. Truman will open the nation's yuletide by pulling a switch ~~which~~ ^{ing} lights the National Christmas Tree on the south lawn of the White House. With that will go a speech, and carol singing.

BETHLEHEM

There will be a magnificent spectacle in Bethlehem tomorrow evening. The occasion will be the ceremonial entry of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem into the ancient church of the Nativity.

It is timely and consoling to be able to report that through all these months of violence and bloodshed, some important work of pious restoration has been going on in the city where the Savior was born.

In spite of all the strife in the Holy Land, architects and antiquarians have been restoring the fifty slender ~~columns~~ columns which support the roof of the Basilica built by the Roman Emperor Justinian in the Sixth Century. The Palestinian Department of Antiquities has supervised this work; and the story today tells how they have uncovered some red limestone columns and some of the life-size paintings and statues. Among them, the figures of some thirty saints.

The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem has passed through many vicissitudes since Justinian built it. In six hundred and Fourteen, the Persian King,

Chosroes the Second captured it. A few years later, the Greco-Romans forces under Heraclius, recovered it. In Six Hundred and Thirty-six, the Arabs conquered it and held it for more than four centuries, until the Crusaders occupied Bethlehem. In those years, its sacred relics were treated with greater respect by the Mohammedans than by the Christians. The Crusaders, in Bethlehem as in Jerusalem, did most of the damage. For one thing, they found the classical architecture of the beautiful Byzantine Church too severe. So they covered the columns and walls with paintings ~~xxx~~ and super-~~imposed~~ imposed Gothic architecture upon the Byzantine Original.

The entry of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem into the church of the Nativity tomorrow night will be accompanied by much pomp and symbolic ritual.

WISH

And here's the story of a wish come true at Christmastime -- a whole raft of them, in fact. Last spring, Israel Broadsword, last of Idaho's surviving G A R veterans, made three wishes -- the last fulfilled today.

In the spring his first wish was to live to be one hundred years old; then, to vote in the next general elections, and finally, to own a Civil War uniform.

Well, Broadsword has already cast his ballot; today he celebrated his one hundredth birthday, and the Red Cross has notified him that the Civil War uniform is on the way.

PARSON

"Thou shalt not steal" says the Bible.

Especially around Christmas. But tonight Charles Thackwell, parson of the church-by-the-Side-of-the Road, Okanogan, Washington, is in ~~xxxxxx~~ county jail. The charge -- grand larceny - the theft of an airplane.

Last Sunday preacher Thackwell, was in Tacoma, and he had to preach a sermon in Spokane, and he was late. Then, miraculously, there appeared before him an empty plane. Preacher Thackwell climbed aboard and flew to Spokane in time for the sermon.

But the ~~Sheriff~~ Sheriff didn't call it a miracle. He ~~called it theft and~~ locked ^{up the sky pilot -} ~~the parson up~~ And at this time of year, too.

VETERAN FOLLOW RIP VAN WINKLE

Here's a story with a prison background, but a different angle. A New York man passed all the war years in Sing Sing. ~~Penitentiary~~. When he came out, he had twentycents and a damaged reputation. But he also had a talent for designing furniture. In almost no time he rehabilitated himself, made a brilliant comeback. *Then, as* Christmas approached, he decided he wanted to do something for one of the men who had ~~helped him~~ *helped him while he was* ~~at Sing Sing~~ *win the Great War - while he was at Sing Sing.* ~~was in prison~~. He had acquired a small but well appointed apartment. It is only one room and a half, but in it are all the comforts and beauties that skill and money can provide, *including* ~~with~~ a fireplace that burns ~~real~~ wood. He thought the most appropriate way to show his feelings would be to turn that apartment over, furnished, to a veteran who had no home. Out of hundreds of men who applied, the lucky man is Lieutenant Commander Herbert A. Levitt who, with Mrs. Levitt, has been living with his parents in ~~a crowded~~ three-room apartment, sleeping on a cot in the living room.

Lieutenant Commander ~~Herbert A.~~ Levitt joined

the Navy in July Nineteen Forty, fought in the battles of the Timor Sea, of Soerabaja, of the Java Sea, Sundra Straits and other engagements. He was on the Cruiser Houston when the Japs sank her, and was captured on the Island of Java. For three years, the enemy shuttled him around in prison camps, all the way from Java to Manchuria. He holds the Purple Heart with cluster, the Bronze Star, and the Legion of Merit. Meanwhile Mrs. Levitt was a Navy nurse for forty-four months, seven of those overseas.

And now Commander and Mrs. Levitt are going to move in to that apartment, which includes a Christmas tree, a refrigerator full of food, the first month's rent paid, and no deal under the counter with the Superintendent of the apartment house.

The Levitts will have one guest for their Christmas dinner, the man who was in Sing Sing when they were off at war. And when you too were a flyer in the war, Nelson.

RIP VAN WINKLE

Almost forty years ago, Charles Hanson killed a policeman in Chicago. After waiting six months to be tried, he was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. For all these thirty-nine years, he has been in Joliet Penitentiary.

Now, according to the law of Illinois, he should have had a prompt trial. In fact, that is a provision of the constitution of the United States. So ~~xxxxx~~ lawyers decided that old Charlie Hanson, now seventy-five might have a chance to be released, since the law was rather careless with him thirty-nine years ago. Today they brought him to Chicago for a hearing, his first sight of the outside world in practically forty years. He saw more changes than Rip Van Winkle. Although Orville and Wilbur Wright had flown their heavier-than-air machine at Kitty Hawk, there were no planes flying the skies when Charlie Hanson went to Joliet.

As they showed him transport liners high over the city, he said: "The sky is for birds." But he got a great impression out of the magnificence and luxury of

Michigan Boulevard and the multitudes in the great stores on State Street. Charles Hanson said thirty-nine years in prison had taught him one thing for sure: Yes, you've guessed it: -- that crime doesn't pay. If the courts do set Charlie free, ~~xx~~ a Santa Claus in Lincoln, Nebraska, will give him a job -- even if he is age seventy-five.