

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

The (four ^{American} airmen will be set free tomorrow, Thursday.

This was announced by the ~~Hungarian~~ Legation in Washington late this afternoon. The Reds acted after the U.S.

Government had announced that it would pay the thirty thousand dollars, assessed against the four airmen in the form of penalties for alleged espionage. Huge fines; sheer blackmail;) and it comes hard to pay a shakedown by Red extortion. But it would be still harder to have flyers of the American Air Force in a Communist prison, serving sentences through no fault of their own.

So today, Secretary of State Acheson announced that the U.S. Charge d'Affaires at Budapest had been instructed to inform the Red Foreign Office that the United States will pay the one hundred and twenty thousand dollars -- if the

flyers are released promptly.

So that would seem to end an ugly episode which has aroused much angry resentment. Today, from far and wide, came reports of moves to raise funds for the liberation of the flyers -- the idea seemed to be that it would be less humiliating if the money were to be put up by citizens, instead of the U.S. Government. The latest -- the American Legion offering to provide the entire sum. The StateDepartment has been trying to discourage these private efforts, but they spring up out of popular indignation. All of which would seem to be academic -- now that Washington has told the Hungarian Reds that the ransom will be paid. And the report is that the flyers will be set free tomorrow.

The new American ambassador to Moscow - -

George F. Kennan, longtime State Department expert on Soviet affairs.⁷ The appointment has been anticipated, but was not certain to go through.

Kennan has been one of the prime authors of the American policy of checking Red aggression, and it seemed likely enough that his appointment might not be agreeable to Moscow. The Soviets had been denouncing Kennan recently - - and, in fact, Pravda today printed a bitter attack on him.

Yet, tonight we have the announcement from the Truman home at Independence, Missouri - - the President stating that he has named George F. Kennan to Moscow. Which is immediately followed by words that the Soviet government has said - - okay.

According to diplomatic custom, they might quite correctly refuse the Kennan appointment. But, not at all - - Moscow makes no objection.

KOREA TRUCE.....

Late news in tonight relates that the U.N. truce team has arrived at Pan Mun Jom for the final session - - before the end of the thirty-day period for an attempt to agree on an armistice. The attempt has failed - - but (General Ridgeway has been authorized to agree to a fifteen-day extension of the deadline, if he sees any chance of success.) This is up to the Supreme Commander, who is to be guided by developments on the scene. He can extend the truce deadline, or call off the arrangement whereby the present battlefront would be an armistice line. Thus far, there has been no indication of what he will do. Nor is there any sign of whether or not there will be a resumption of full-scale warfare following an end to the truce period. The word from Korea is that there is not likely to be any immediate flare-up of battle - since the armistice negotiations will continue, deadline or no deadline.

(Today's developments in the talks at Pan Mun Jom were grim. The Reds declared that five-hundred

and seventy-one prisoners of war were killed by Allied air attack or gunfire, or perished from disease.)

They say that casualties among prisoners of war were caused by American war planes and shellfire, when prisoners were escorted to the rear. (Our negotiators retorted immediately with bitter suspicion of - - murder committed by Reds guarding prisoners.)

The Communists added that one-hundred-and-fifty-two prisoners have escaped, and three have been released. To which the U.N. representatives reply that - - not one of these ever came back to the Allied lines.)

On their side the Communists are demanding information about Red prisoners whose names, they claim are not on the lists given by the Allies.

One bright feature today was - - the handing over of letters. In the truce tent at Pan Mun Jom, Communist officers produced a parcel, about a foot high - - the first mail from prisoners to their

families. This was taken for prompt delivery - -
and at last word the letters were being sorted out
and sent on their way. Families in the United
States to hear soon from prisoners of war.

BOMBING.....

The F.B.I. announces an all-out investigation of terrorism in Florida. This follows another bombing outrage today - - killing Harry T. Moore, head of the Florida section of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. His wife - - injured by the blast that shattered their home. This comes as a climax in a whole series of bombings and bombing attempts - - chiefly at Miami, where attacks have been made on Jewish synagogues and Negro housing projects.

KING.....

Britain today was given reassurance about King George - - in a characteristic bit of news.

Yesterday, misgivings were aroused by the Royal broadcast on Christmas. The voice of George the Sixth was harsh and weak - - recalling the lung operation of a few weeks ago. His tone, rasping and feeble, sounded ominous.

Today the Royal physicians explained that, after the lung operation, the King's voice was affected, and he had to take special breathing exercises. But the reassurance was something more typically British.

It was simply announced that, during the Christmas holidays His Majesty had been out shooting! At Sandringham, the country residence of the Royal family, George Sixth set out with his gunbearers. Game beaters drove the birds, and his Majesty blazed away.

All so royally traditional that Britons from this can really be reassured.

There was wild rioting today in the ancient city of Alexandria - - when Moslem extremists went on the rampage, demonstrating against the appointment of two advisers to King Farouk. Thirty-one were injured in a battle between a crowd of students and the police, the latter firing with buckshot and hurling tear-gas bombs against a barrage of bricks and stones. Tonight a statement of emergency has been proclaimed in both Alexandria and Cairo.

The two appointments were made by King Farouk himself, who names his own council of advisers. These are independent of the Cabinet Ministry, which is responsible to the Cairo Parliament. The two new advisers are moderates who favor a compromise with Great Britain in the Suez Canal dispute. One is the Egyptian ambassador to London who was called home last week, bringing a new crisis in the quarrel. He is a graduate of Oxford. The other - - a diplomatic veteran who has represented Egypt in London twice, first as minister, then ambassador.

The appointments are considered as meaning - -

King Farouk wants to do something to settle the bitter feud. Possibly - - by bringing Egypt into a Near Eastern defense pact which could provide a compromise in the question of Suez Canal control.

At any rate, that is the belief of diplomatic circles in London - - also the belief of the raging mobs in Alexandria. They were storming today against any compromise.

AFRICA.....

Here's a war bulletin - - from Africa. Not about any conflict with planes and tanks - - but, fiercer! Tribal war in the old tradition of Africa - - with a casualty rate far worse than anything in Korea.

It happened at Johannesburg, the Gold Center - where the workers are recruited from native tribes. Some are Zulus, renowned for their belligerent history, others are Basutos, also plenty warlike.

Trouble broke out between the Zulus and the Basutos at Johannesburg, and today's dispatch tells how it flared in sudden, savage conflict. The number of warriors in the battle was not large - - only three hundred. The clash was brief, lasting only three minutes before the police intervened and stopped it. But the casualties number - - sixteen killed and more than one hundred wounded. That many - - in a fight of three hundred for three minutes. Worse than modern war. Zulus and Basutos in tribal battle.

REFUGEE.....

Yesterday was a sad Christmas for a Hungarian Javelin thrower at Toronto - - but today it was different.

He's an Olympic athlete, Zoltan Medgessy, who represented Hungary in the games - - then fled from the tyranny of the Reds. A few days ago he told Toronto newsmen that this would be the saddest Christmas of his life - - because he didn't know where his family was. They, too, had escaped from Red Hungary, but had lost track of each other.

Today, the news item attracted attention at a Toronto rubber tire factory, not far from the home of the javelin thrower. There a laboratory technician from Hungary, read it with profound interest. He's a brother of the Olympic star. Michael Medgessy, also a javelin thrower - - former junior Hungarian champion.

So a merry Christmas was delayed until today, when the brothers rejoined each other - - those two Hungarian javelin throwers, Michael and Zoltan.

SNOWMAN.....

Recently, a British expedition returned from exploration of the southern slopes of Mount Everest. Where the climbers, headed by Eric Shipton, found large animal tracks in the snow - - at an altitude considered above the range of beasts of any size. They photographed the footprints, pictures reproduced in British newspapers. - - And now there's speculation about the fearsome creatures, if fearsome they are.

Well, such animal tracks are an old story, having been reported in those famous attempts to scale Everest in the 1920s. Today, a member of the Eric Shipton expedition says he thinks the footprints were made by a red bear of the Himalayas. But no such simple explanation will do, where there is a chance for beguiling mystery - - like the "Abominable Snowman"! as they call it.

The name is a literal translation of a Tibetan expression for half human creatures of the snow. Hideous faces and coats of shaggy hair - -

sort of Missing Link. Two tribes - one standing only five feet high, rather mild, the other, monsters eight feet tall, and ferocious. They devour yaks! A human being? - - Just a small morsel!

The sensation in London inspired the New York Times to flash an inquiry to its correspondent, Robert Trumbull - - who, at present, is in Nepal, secluded Himalayan kingdom in the region of Everest. Trumbull inquired of a Nepalese official, Colonel K. N. Rana, who knows about such matters. Whereupon Colonel Rana presented some evidence if you can call it that.

He says that, not long ago word came to Nepal that some wandering tribesmen captured an infant of the giant monster breed. They seized it, took it along - - and then disappeared. The news came by the Himalayan grapevine, and parties went out in search of the tribesmen and the baby "Abominable Snowman", but they were never found.

On another occasion some hillmen encountered one of the smaller species (the five-foot kind, seized it, and tied it up with ropes). But the "Abominable Snowman" refused to eat, and starved to death. The mountain men (were so ignorant, they) never realized the value of the carcass - - which they abandoned. Colonel Rana says a search was made for it, but the body of the "Abominable Snowman" was never found.

So that's the evidence - same kind as you're likely to find in legends of monsters in many mountainous regions. Tomorrow I expect to be in the Devil's River country on the north of Mt. Tremblant, in the snowy Laurentians. There I'll ask Frankie and Johnnie O'Rears what monsters they've seen or heard of up here in the Mountains of Quebec. To find Frankie and Johnnie, Nelson, I'll have to go to a place called The Bear Pit!