

C. J. Sumner. Monday, Dec. 25, 1939.

WAR

On the Western front the war news follows a Christmas comparative pattern -- peace if not so much good will between the troops behind the opposing lines;-- a little patrol activity last night, ^{There were} but today -- all quiet. ~~The~~ reports of a British air raid against the German North Sea bases, but London denies that. British air squadrons did fly in those embattled skies today. But, it was only a reconnaissance affair, no bombing, no opposition, no air fights, no ~~shot~~ shooting.

The war news, as might be expected, is from the ~~Russia~~ Finnish front. Old Russia never did pay any attention to the ~~twenty-five thousand~~ twenty-fifth of December. The realm of the Czars celebrated the Nativity according to the old style calendar, ~~the date~~ ^{the Julian, not the Gregorian - the date of Xmas} a couple of weeks hence. And Red Russia, of course, represents militant atheism, and regards any celebration of Christmas as counter-revolutionary. [#] So today the Red army celebrated with wholesale air raids, striking at many places in Finland with the crash of exploding bombs, especially at Viipuri, one of Finland's most important cities -- just behind the ~~fighting~~ fighting line on the Karelian Isthmus. Bombs fell on Viipuri all day long, and artillery shells also. For the Reds have brought

up heavy long-range artillery, and big-gun shells blasted Viipuri today. (United Press correspondent Webb Miller tells of a moody incident, ^{the} bombardment ~~that~~ struck fiercely in the part of the city inhabited by Russians. Webb was walking along through the ruins, when from the wreckage of a workman's house he picked up a book. It was a New Testament, the Gospels, in Russian.)

Christmas Day attacks on the Mannerheim Line ~~seem to~~ ^{the now} continue ~~now as an~~ old story. The Finns holding their own, heavy Soviet attacks repulsed.

On other fronts -- the amazing success of the army of Finland continues. (In the Far North the Finns are chasing the Red battalions up toward the Arctic Ocean. There seems to be a Red army disaster ~~in~~ amid frightful Arctic cold,) and weird horror stories tell of Soviet troops frozen, ~~many~~ machine gunners in position at their ^{guns,} ~~guns~~ armoured car drivers frozen on their seats, grotesque figures dotting the landscape. The Soviet trouble there ^{is explained as} ~~seems to have been~~ a complete breakdown of supplies ^{in the} ~~and~~ blizzards above the Arctic Circle. Red Army battalions retreating because of the sheer lack of food and shelter -- the Finns fiercely pursuing.

(In the central area of the Eastern front where a few days ago the Soviets were threatening to cut Finland in two -- the Red army retreat has gone so far that the Finns are said to be fighting on Russian territory in places.) There the Red Army units, which pushed ahead so rapidly and apparently into a trap -- are reported to have had no food for three days.

POPE

Ordinarily when an important story breaks, it is followed up quickly by significant comment -- reactions of the nations or the world. (The most important story in many a day was President Roosevelt's appointment of an American emissary to the Vatican to work for peace in collaboration with Pope Pius the Twelfth. ~~That news story broke yesterday morning.~~ It was followed in the papers this morning by the response of the Roman Pontiff -- his warm welcome of the President's action and ~~xx~~ his suggestion of a five-point program for a moral peace.) Yet tonight we've had no volume of indicative comment from the capitals of the nations, ^{London, Paris, Berlin.} That's inevitable, because the peace moves by President Roosevelt and Pope Pius were timed ^{for} ~~at~~ Christmas. This year we have Christmas following a Sunday -- both being days when activity ~~xxx~~ halts in the chancelleries of the Christian nations.

So tonight there's little to report of the reactions ^{in the various} ~~in London, Paris, Berlin and other~~ capitals.

In England King George gave a radio message to the British Empire as ~~xx~~ is customary on Christmas. He made no mention

of the moves by President and Pontiff. In Britain such matters of State are for the Ministers to discuss and not the King.

But it is being noted that the Christmas message spoken by George the Sixth was in places oddly similar to that of the peace appeal uttered by Pius the Twelfth. Let's compare two of the statements they made. George the Sixth, taking a decidedly religious tone, ^{and} ~~he~~ calling for the support of Christian civilization, spoke these words: ~~Through~~ "True peace is in the hearts of men", ^{said he} and the tragedy of this time is that there are powerful countries whose direction and policy are based on aggression and the suppression of all we hold dear ~~xx~~ for Mankind."

The Pope used these words: "It seems that the world has forgotten Christ's message of peace, the voice of reason and Christian brotherhood. ^{We have} ~~We have~~ been obliged to see a series of irreconcilable acts." ^{and then he went on:-} "Irreconcilable both in regard to international law and to the principles of national law and to the most elementary sentiments of humanity." And then he referred to Finland, though he did not mention Soviet Russia.

Another curious similarity:- George the Sixth, in his

denunciation of aggression, mentioned neither Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia, Neither did Pope Pius the Twelfth.

The latest and most striking observation that I have here is from Senator King of Utah. As for religious affiliation, Senator King is a prominent member of the Mormon Church. He speaks this way of the President's action: "The letter to the Pope was admirable, and I should approve most heartily that the United States should take the lead in every movement toward peace. The Catholic Church," he noted, "is in a position to give large assistance to the restoration of peace."

IRELAND

There was trouble in Northern Ireland today, with outbreaks of rioting throughout the Ulster area. Just to make things even between the Irish North and South, the disturbances began in Dublin yesterday -- where Extremists of the Irish Republican army raided a military supply base and siezed guns and amunition. The DeValera Government arrested four of the I.R.A. people for that.

But that Christmas eve in Dublin was only a prelude for a riotus Yuletide today in the Northern counties. In the jail at Londonderry were ~~sixy~~ sixty members of the I.R.A. -- Extremists in the violent campaign to have Ulster break away from Great Britain and join with Nationalist ~~Irish~~ Ireland. These ~~xi~~ sixty had been siezed by the Ulster authorities when the war broke out -- so they wouldn't have any chance to plot and agitate. They were interned for the duration of the war. Naturally, they don't consider their imprisonment fair or just, and today they decided to celebrate Christmas, make merry in their own fashion. *R* They set upon three jailors, overpowered them, and locked them in cells, and went storming about smashing

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furniture. And then they set the jail on fire. With smoke pouring out of the building, they stood at windows yelling and singing Irish Republican songs. Not surprisingly, a huge crowd gathered in the street to see the fire and listen to the uproar. They heard a choice lot of South Irish Revolutionary Republican singing.

In the end the sixty prison mutineers barricaded themselves in a building, ~~not on fire. And they made~~ *and made a final* stand behind fortifications constructed of timber and tables, lumber and chairs, whatever they could get their hands on. And they ^{it} battled [^] out by hurling bricks and bottles and socking ~~their~~ ^a way with clubs. Prison guards tried to storm the barricade. Workmen were put on the job to cut through the improvised rampart. And the firemen called to put out the fire turned their hoses on the defenders. Alternately they poured water on the blaze and on the battling Irishmen. I don't know which needed it the most, the blaze or the Irishmen. The insurgents were finally subdued but not until they had provided the Londonderry jail with an exceedingly merry Christmas.

In other North Irish places there was uproar and skirmishing. Belfast, for example -- where the police made scores of ~~XXXX~~ arrests.

NEUTRALITY

We have some indication today of the kind of reception the Pan American Neutrality protest is getting behind the European diplomatic scenes. The twenty-one Western Hemisphere Republics meeting at Panama decreed a three-hundred-mile Neutrality Zone around American shores, a safety ~~zone~~ belt in which belligerent activities were forbidden. Then came the naval battle which resulted in the self-destruction of the German pocket battleship Graf Spee. That was right outside the harbor of Montevideo -- and it certainly did come under the heading of belligerent ~~activity~~ activity; The thunder of cannon on the sea. So, the twenty-one American Republics, including the United States, sent a protest to London, Berlin and Paris -- ~~as the~~ ^{all} three nations in the war. The next thing on the program will be a reply to the Pan American protest.

From London comes the word today that British Foreign Office circles don't believe the protest is likely to get anywhere. These Foreign Office circles point out that the safety zone idea presupposes that the Western Hemisphere Republics will conduct a Neutrality patrol, keep a lookout for belligerent ^{activities.}

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But that in turn conjures up some figures. A band three hundred miles wide around the coasts of all the American Republics amounts to an area of five million square miles. And that's a lot of water to patrol efficiently. There aren't enough ^warships to keep any sort of watch over five million square miles of ocean.-- London points to German submarine attacks on ships within the area, and says that before the Allies can yield to the Pan American protest, they'll have to have definite assurance that the Nazis too will respect the safety band.

Moreover dubious comments are being heard in South America -- to the effect that the Neutrality Zone idea might tend to get the Western Hemisphere nations into war instead of keeping war from this side of the ocean.

MURPHY

Here's a third term tip -- for Christmas. Some folks might consider it a cheery Yuletide gift to be told -- there will be a third term. Others may prefer their Christmas present to take this form -- no, there won't be any third term. Today's tip was given us by the Detroit News, which in turn has it from Attorney General Frank Murphy. The News quotes the Attorney General as declaring -- that he does not believe President Roosevelt wants a third term or will seek one.

There are a few ifs and buts about it. Speaking of President Roosevelt the Attorney General is quoted as saying:- "It's difficult for me to conceive of his becoming a candidate, unless forced to do so by some national emergency. Of course," he qualifies, "that is just a personal opinion." To which one may add another ~~quote~~, "of course," and say -- the third term opinion of the Attorney General of the United States will, "of course," get considerable attention.

Klerokoper.

Dec. 25, 1939.

INTRO TO MR. KLEREKOPER

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I have a most appropriate Christmas visitor sitting beside me tonight. He comes from up near the North Pole. So, I suppose we could call him the special representative of Santa Claus. His home is ^{Just about} the farthest north point on the North American continent, the place nearest the North Pole in Uncle Sam's northern empire of Alaska -- Point Barrow. Hundreds of miles north of the Arctic Circle, in an eerie region where there are few sounds except the soft padding of your sled dogs, your malemutes' feet, and the creaking of your sled as it goes over the ice hummocks, and the cries of your Eskimo driver. Up where at this season of the year there is no light except starlight, reflected on a world of unending snow and fields of broken ice. Up where from November to January the sun doesn't show itself above the horizon,

The name of this visitor is Frederick G. Klerekoper, and he is a missionary among the Eskimo.

Mr. Santa Claus, I mean Mr. Klerekoper, what do you and your Eskimo usually do at Christmas time up there at Point Barrow?

In the first place, Lowell, we start preparing for Christmas almost twelve months ahead of time, in January. That, is, we send orders out to the States for candy, popcorn, and other things. Boats only visit us when the Arctic Ocean is not closed tight with ice, usually in August. So we send our orders out by dog-team mail, in January or February. Then our supplies arrive in August.

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L.T.:- And you store your Christmas things from then until December; and what happens on Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day, up there in the land of the walrus and the polar bear?

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MR. K.:- Oh, on Christmas Eve we have a program for the Eskimo in our little church, re-telling the old story of the Babe in the Manger. The room is jammed, with Eskimo, even sitting on the stairs up to the balcony and in all the aisles. Then, Christmas Day they come back for another celebration which we call "The Feast." On the church walls hang pictures of Santa Claus. There are paper streamers everywhere, and in one corner a tree.

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L.T.:- But, if I remember my Alaska, there are no trees at Point Barrow. Even the Arctic Tundra is covered with ice, and in front of you is the ice of the polar sea. So where does the tree come from?

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MR. K.*- Oh, it's a synthetic tree. We make it by nailing two-by-fours together, boring holes in them, and sticking pieces of wood in the holes. These fake branches are covered with green crepe paper. The Eskimo are all dressed up too. Many of them put gingham or calico right over their reindeer-skin parkas. The mother rock gently back and forth, trying to keep the babies quiet that are in the packs on their backs. Many of the people slip down from their chairs in order to be more comfortable, sitting on the floor.

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L.T.+ I suppose you give out presents at this Christmas Day "Feast".

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MR. K.:- Yes, and the Eskimo all bring presents, bags of raw frozen fish, and pails of raw frozen whale skin which they call muktuk, and reindeer meat and other things, such as spears, boots,

mukluks, braided sinew for sewing, and so on. We of the Mission, in turn, give out gifts in clothing for all of them. Many people here in the States send up woolen socks, underwear, overalls, dolls and toys. Then, as soon as the gifts are distributed the Eskimo of Point Barrow hurry home to open their packages. And, all over the village lights can be seen in the huts twinkling through glass as they pump their gasoline lanterns, or glowing through hut windows, as they burn their midnight seal oil.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

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L.T.:- To which I'll add my Merry Christmas. and Hugh --