

Wed. Mar. 15 1950, P.J.-R.G.

The punishment imposed on Captain John G. Crommelin is the sternest possible - next to court martial. The Navy flyer has said repeatedly that he wants a court martial. But the high brass of the Navy is against any military trial of the outspoken officer - not wanting to give him a sounding board for airing his bitter opinions on unification. They are not eager for a repetition of the famous case of General Billy Mitchell - whose court martial headlined him as a martyr-prophet of aviation.

So he is being suspended - furloughed with half pay. Which is the first time such a sentence has been imposed by the Navy in nearly twenty-five years. Back in Nineteen twenty-six Admiral Thomas MacGruder, commander of the fourth naval district at Philadelphia was put on furlough as punishment for writing a magazine article criticizing the policies of the Navy. He was never returned to active service.

The sequence of events in the case of Captain Crommelin has been ⁱⁿ the headlines, - he was a

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stormy figure in the revolt of the Admirals, was reprimanded, was removed from ~~import~~ duty ~~to~~ in Washington and banished to a post in San Francisco. He was ordered to keep silent on the controversial subject of unification. But, instead, the flyer hero of air battles in the Second World War went right ahead - making speeches and denouncing the unification ~~mitt~~ policies as "Prussian" and a danger to national defense.

So now - an indefinite furlough at half pay. The Captain can get back into active duty by promising to keep quiet.

But Crommelin tonight breathes only defiance, saying: "I've closed the range to the point where I'm hitting them with every salvo, every burst."

GUBITCHEV

Another quick change in the Gubitchev case - another sudden reversal. ^{now} He's to go back to Russia. Today, the lawyer for the convicted spy told the court that his client is willing to go through formalities permitting him to return home. These formalities consist of withdrawing an appeal to the higher courts, so that the prison sentence of fifteen years may be suspended.

Yesterday, the lawyer refused to do this, and declared that Gubitchev would stay in this country - fighting his case in the higher courts. Which certainly was a curious twister - and provoked no end of speculation. Today the attorney Abraham Pomerantz, stated that his action yesterday was without the consent of his client - although yesterday he told news men that in, insisting on the appeal, he was following instructions from Gubitchev. Today, Pomerantz was accompanied to court by a Soviet embassy representative, Novikov, who was Gubitchev's interpreter during the trial.

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Well, we can't guess what went on behind the scenes. But tonight, as matters now stand, there's another quick change act - with Gubitchev scheduled to be deported, sailing on a Polish liner Monday.

FRANCE

The French national assembly tonight ratified the military aid pact with the United States. The majority - four-hundred-and-twenty-one to one-hundred-and-seventy-nine. Only the Communists and their supporters were in the opposition. The vote was no surprise, but the circumstances were. It had been expected that the Communists would raise cain all over the place - howling and screaming and rioting. They have been doing that in protest against the plans to ship American weapons and munitions to France. But in the debate today and in the voting tonight they were as quiet as mice.

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SERETSE

RETAKE

In London today, the government of Great Britain surrendered, hauled up the white flag, and capitulated - to Seretse Khama. The cabinet of Prime Minister Attlee takes back its order - forbidding that African chief to return to his native tribe. Seretse Khama is now permitted to resume his position as potentate of the Bamangwato tribe in Bechuanaland - along with his white queen, the former London typist, Ruth Williams.

This follows the collapse of the British attempt to persuade the South African tribe to accept the London decree - exiling Seretse Khama for five years. But that is not the real reason why the London Government reversed itself so abjectly today. A revolt was threatening in the ranks of the Labor Party - because of Seretse Khama. The color line angle annoyed the left wing laborites in Parliament - and Prime Minister Attlee was faced with a possible revolt. He has a mere majority of six - and, if the Seretse affair had gone to a vote, it might have resulted in

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TAXES

In Congress today, the brand of the oratory was to be explained by the day of the month. Ancient Rome called this day - the Ides of March. And noble Caesar fell victim to the daggers of the assassins on that same day - the Ides of March. With us, it's almost as ominous - as was reflected by gloomy tones in Congress.

Right away, Republican Congressman Rich of Pennsylvania got up and started to declaim, "Taxes, taxes, taxes!" He cried. He sang a song of woe on this day of the income tax - and then grew mournfully romantic. He noted that this is spring - when a young man's fancy ~~quite~~ turns^s lightly to thoughts of love. "But", cried the Congressman, "suppose the young man decides to propose. He has to pay a twenty-per-cent tax on the engagement ring, and another twenty-per-cent tax on the wedding ring. And then, after a while, twenty-per-cent on each can of baby powder."

This Republican assault on the fiscal policy of the administration was answered by the Democrats.

TAXES,.....2

They don't like to pay taxes either; but they are loyal to their party. So, Congressman Redden of North Carolina assumed a joyful, happy tone - as joyful and happy as possible. "I am delighted to say that the Republicans are not the only ones who pay taxes," he cried gleefully.

Two thousand years ago the soothsayer cried in lugubrious voice: "Caesar, beware the Ides of ~~March~~ March! In this era, we have the same sentiment about - income tax day.

SUBSTITUTE LORA LEE

The film career of the child star, Lora Lee, is at an end. This afternoon in Hollywood, the Nine Year old actress was made a ward of the juvenile court - and Superior Judge A A. Scott ruled that Lora Lee ~~xxx~~ will not appear in pictures again.

This decision was made after a conference with the girl's foster parents, Mr. and Mrs. Otto Michel. "The Michels agreed," says Judge Scott, that ~~xxxx~~ Lora's motion picture work should be a thing of the past -- in the best interests of the child."

She ran away from the home of her foster parents, claiming that they starved her to keep her small enough for child parts in pictures - but that story was discounted today. Judge Scott declaring "Lora is a precocious, emotional child, who can get a lot of people into trouble. I cannot tell when she is acting, and when she is telling the truth."

CLEAR CREEK ANNIE

The state of Colorado hands down a decision in favor of Clear Creek Annie. Today Attorney General Metzger declared that the grey haired woman, with *the* shotguns, is entitled to remain in her ^a shack near Black Hawk - where she has been threatening to blow the daylights out of state authorities trying to make her move. *She's Colorado's version of Annie - set-your-bum-in-real-life.*

A great new highway is being built, a three and a half million dollar project, which was planned to run right through the bit of land occupied by Clear Creek Annie. What's her title to the property? Squatters' rights - nothing else. Years ago, Annie settled down there in a sort of ramshackle cabin. She never bought the place, and has no deedsⁿ or documents to attest ownership. But she comes under the provisions of an old-time law, dating back to the original settlers, who asserted and won - Squatters' Rights.

When the new three and a half million dollar highway came along, Annie refused to get out,

refused to sell, and refused to do anything. She had two ominous looking shotguns in her shanty - and, with these, she drove off the highway construction people.

So now nothing can be done about it, the attorney general blaming the whole thing on what he calls - "The usual highway department bungling." He says the department awarded road-building contracts without first getting complete possession of the right of way. They just forgot a thing or two - including Clear Creek Annie.

POLAR BEAR

There was a wild affray at Melbourne, Australia, today - a fight with a polar bear. It happened at the Melbourne Zoo, where they had ^{ye-or had-} a snowy giant, seven feet tall - procured last year from the zoo at San Diego, California. That polar bear had traveled a long way from his original habitat, somewhere in the Arctic North.

Today, the huge animal got loose, attacked a keeper, and was dragging him along. Another attendant came up, and opened fire with a pistol - but the polar bear flattened him with one blow of its paw. The two men, both injured, were in desperate peril of their lives - as the polar bear, maddened with rage, mauled them. A third keeper came to the rescue - with a knife. He took a shot and hit the bear - but the wounded monster merely turned on him, and he was ~~xxxx~~ hardly able to get away. He turned for another shot, well aimed this time - dropping the bear in his tracks.

So the news from Melbourne is - two badly injured. When it might have been - three killed.

ETIQUETTE

Over in England, there's a prophet with a burning sense of a great mission - the improvement of American manners at a banquet. He is John Mills, England's most distinguished ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ toastmaster - who for years has been presiding over London's most exclusive *He is the Pro - who says M'Lord and ladies - the King* knife-and-fork affairs. He says that the dinner table manners, when a lot of Americans gather at a festive board, are the worst in the world. They even shout across the room at each other, and call out from table to table - which has happened even at the Savoy in London.

Toastmaster John Mills has, on occasion, introduced as many as nine hundred guests at a banquet - but, even in a wholesale business like that, he never skimps in the matter of dignity and state. Suppose he has to call out the name of Colonel ^{*Harrump*} Smith O.B.E., M.C. Well, he never says it like that. "I never use initials," declares this model of British good manners, "I always give them their full titles." So the announcement would go: ^{*Harrump*} "Colonel _^ Smith, officer of that

most excellent order of the British Empire, Military Cross."

What irks John Mills the most is the way Americans, at a banquet in Britain will smoke before the royal toast is given. It's the worst of manners to light a cigar or cigarette before that expression of loyalty is made. Recently, when an American started puffing on a cigarette at the wrong moment, John Mills rapped sternly with his ebony gavel and spoke in a frosty voice: "I feel sure it is unnecessary to ask you to refrain from smoking until after the royal toast." The American guest was so embarrassed, he nearly swallowed the cigarette.

So there's a toastmaster with a mission. In ancient Rome, in the days of Nero, history tells of - Petronius, who was called - "Arbiter Elegantarium", arbiter of elegance. His London counterpart is John Mills - and, if you want to think of a nightmare, just imagine a banquet in Kansas City or Omaha, invaded by

John Mills, ^{flanked by} ~~and in line with~~ Petronius Arbiter

Elegantarium on one side and Nelsonious
~~Caesius~~ Caesius on the other.

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