

L.J. - P. & G. Thursday, Dec. 16, 1948.

QUEILLE

In Paris tonight Premier Henri Queille collapsed in the Senate building. The Premier was climbing the ornate "Staircase of Honor". Suddenly he stumbled; ~~and~~ ^{fell} unconscious on the scarlet carpet, ~~and~~ ~~the doctors~~ ~~took him home.~~ ^{tonite} And the word is that the sixty-four year old French ^{premier} ~~politician~~ is recovering from what is described as "a mild heart attack".

CHILE

In San Diego, Chile, this evening Hans von Becker, Austrian Charge d'Affaires, was assassinated in his office. The assassin, a refugee from the Soviet Ukraine, fired three shots at the diplomat, and then turned the gun on himself.

CHINA

The State Department informs us today that we will take no direct part in China's current troubles. A State Department official denied that the United States is intervening in any way to establish a coalition government with the Communists. Also, he said that the Marines arriving at Shanghai today are not there to maintain law and order. They are merely there to protect American lives -- in case of emergency.

Meanwhile, a news dispatch ^{from} ~~from~~ Nanking tells of Communist forces reinforced by land, sea and air, in a new attack northeast of Nanking. This would be a third front against the Nationalist armies.

A news dispatch from Peiping tells of that city sealed off by the Nationalist commander in northern Chian. This to prevent Communist infiltration. Business in the ancient city is said to be at a standstill, with fires still burning in the suburbs. Fires caused by Communist guns.

BERLIN

Radio Berlin, the Soviet's largest propaganda outlet in central Europe, was off the air today -- for two hours. Why? Because the French destroyed the two antenna towers of the Russian-controlled radio station.

The radio towers, one nearly four hundred feet high, stood in the French sector. Last month the French commander warned the Soviets that these towers were a danger to airmen. The Russians didn't even ^{dign to} reply. So today the French commandant cleared everybody out of the neighborhood of the great steel masts, and put his engineers to work. There were two loud explosions. After the smoke cleared away, there were no radio masts - and no Radio Berlin. But there were safer landing conditions for our big planes flying in now at the rate of two hundred-and-fifty a day. An all-time record.

Later today Radio Berlin came on the air again. But its voice was weaker. The broadcast beamed from one of Hitler's old radio towers in the Soviet Zone -- with less than half the power of the original station. ~~And the German announcers have been whispering protests as the~~

DEFENSE

The United States could have been involved in a war last Spring, if a mistaken intelligence estimate had not been corrected -- in time. So we learn from the Eberstadt Committee. This Committee is a part of the bipartisan commission headed by former President Hoover -- the commission charged with re-organizing our Federal government.

The Eberstadt Committee recommends that all our military budget practices be overhauled. Stop all the waste in spending for defense. That's the idea.

Also, the Committee wants the Defense Secretary to be given more power. It asks that he have complete control of the three services, with authority to establish policy. Instead of merely supervising the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, as at present. Give him a far bigger job.

He -- the Defense Secretary -- to be the only defense member of the National Security Council which advises the President on coordinating matters diplomatic

and military.

The general theme of the Eberstadt report is for more centralized control of our armed forces -- under civilian control. "Civilian control of the military," says the report, must be "clearly established, and firmly maintained."

And, finally, the report says that our present military thinking is wrong. This because our strategic plans are made without clear guidance for a long-term peace. It also charges our military thinkers with planning to fight a next war without knowing quite what we'd be fighting for; - if we had another war.

ESPIONAGE

In Washington Congressional spy hunters announce a major drive to find out whether there are spies operating in our government right now. Acting Chairman Mundt told reporters today that next week the House Un-American Activities Committee will start drafting legislation to tighten up our espionage laws. Also, the Committee is following up on the story of a civilian technician at Aberdeen, Maryland, giving information about the Norden bomb sight to Communist agents.

The Committee wants to hear more from Whittaker Chambers -- to get his views on the best way of tightening up on our laws. Congressman Mundt also says the Committee is trying to find out whether spy rings operated in the government after Chambers left the Communist Party in Nineteen Thirty-eight. Also, it has a long list of witnesses to be questioned, including Donald Hiss, brother of Alger Hiss, who today was indicted in New York on two charges of perjury; ~~another indicted was William Pigen, a former employee of the~~

~~Bureau of Standards, who is accused of giving secret papers to Chambers.~~ Congressman Mundt says he is checking with the Justice Department, to find out which of the witnesses can be called, now -- without hindering the prosecution of Alger Hiss. And he adds that the Committee has evidence which shows that until ~~quite~~ recently there were Communists inside ^{our} ~~the~~ State Department -- ~~these~~ Reds, ~~he says,~~ in positions where they could have taken out secret material.

GRAND JURY

In New York today, a high official of the Justice Department charged bungling on the part of an investigator of the House Un-American Activities Committee. He claims that one of the undeveloped microfilms in that pumpkin of Whittaker Chambers' was almost ruined. The Justice Department uses these words:- "a bungling amateur investigator who turned a flashlight on the sensitive negative."

The damage is such that F.B.I. laboratory experts say there is little chance of restoring the negative. All of which, adds the Justice Department, may have prevented the possible indictment of an entire wartime espionage ring.

They say they now do not know what was on the film. An interesting point is raised: - if any of the documents on the ruined film -- and there were some two hundred of them -- were dated later than August twenty-fourth, nineteen thirty-nine, the government might have had evidence to break open an extensive espionage ring. The three-year Statute of Limitations was suspended in

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nineteen forty-two, for the duration of the war, and three years afterwards. That means that espionage after August nineteen thirty-nine, can still be prosecuted.

Today in New York, a new Federal Grand Jury took over from the one that expired yesterday, to investigate Communist espionage. Chief Assistant Attorney General Alex Campbell told reporters that the Justice Department is ready to prosecute whenever it finds evidence to justify a prosecution -- and with no punches pulled.

~~More about the Pumpkin papers.~~ We hear now that the Pumpkin contained a confidential report sent through the State Department in Nineteen Thirty-eight -- a report from "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell.

This message, we are informed, is of particular interest today, as China is in danger of being overrun by the Communists. Ten years ago, when General Stilwell, ^{said} ~~wrote~~ in his secret report ^{that} ~~how~~ the Japanese armies were stalemated in China -- neither side able to win. "Only the Reds have a definite plan," he wrote. That plan -- guerrilla warfare, and mobilization of the masses.

This Stilwell dispatch, found among the Pumpkin papers, sent in one of the Government's most confidential codes. If the Red spy ring had access to the original code, it would have been a simple matter for the code to be broken, and many of our top-flight ~~secret~~ secrets would have been known abroad.

BLIND

Some time ago, remember the story of Clarence Peddicord, the blind man who was starting out to hitch-hike to New York, from Portland, Oregon? The blind man heading East for an operation. Hoping to regain his sight.

Well, today Clarence went back home by plane, with a load of Christmas presents for his wife and children. Can he see? Not yet! He'll have to come back next June, for one more operation -- And then, maybe.

The doctors had expected he would be able to see his wife and children this Christmas. But Fate ~~ix~~ intervened -- in an odd way. The operation was in progress in the hospital. Peddicord lying on his back. Someone told him to roll his eyes, and he obeyed. ~~And~~ Suddenly, he could see -- there was a flash of light in his sightless eyes. And what did he see? Well, he saw what the surgeons were doing. And, his reaction was natural. He pulled away -- at the wrong moment. So, now they'll have to try it all over again.

PRESIDENT

In Washington today, Mr Truman says he hasn't changed his attitude about the Congressional Committee's investigation of Communism. It is still a red herring to him. He adds that he regards the whole matter as closed.

Also, that he will not veto a salary increase for himself if Congress passes it! But, he says, he wants to make it plain that he did not ask for a pay hike for himself, although he did want more money for other top government officials. However, if he gets his -- well, he won't say No.

COSTA RICA

A five-nation commission is leaving Washington tonight for Costa Rica. They are going to investigate the alleged invasion of that country. This Commission is to be the first test of the new Cooperative Defense System worked out by the American Republics. The Commission even has power to recommend armed help for Costa Rica, if it finds that Nicaragua did play a part in the invasion. But the general feeling is that the invasion was merely a raid by an armed band of the supporters of Costa Rica's former President, Rafael Guardia.

Today, in San Jose -- the Costa Rican capital -- former President Guardia was tried, in-absentia, and, formally convicted of treason. The charge made was that he cooperated with a foreign country, Nicaragua, for an invasion of his homeland. Evidence at the trial was given by one of the invading party -- a Nicaraguan officer, captured by Costa Rican troops on the frontier, early this week. This man stated that the commanding officer of the

invading troops actually did belong to the Nicaraguan National Guard. He also testified having seen former President Guardia with the invading party. The Nicaraguan prisoner even had circumstantial evidence to offer. He identified his own Mauser rifle produced in court, said it was given to him by the son of the Dictator of Nicaragua, General Somoza. And he pointed to the Nicaraguan coat of arms etched on the stock of the weapon.

Whereupon the court found the former President of Costa Rica guilty -- of treason. And the belief in San Jose is that he'll face a firing squad -- that is, if captured. Although, Costa Rica is one of the few enlightened nations where the death penalty has been abolished.

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That five-nation commission, by the way, has another job on its hands, while down there. It has been told to investigate stories going round about a "Caribbean Legion." This Legion, we hear, is a band of lawless

soldiers-of-fortune, equipped with modern arms --
ready to fight for anybody at any time; their services
available to the highest bidder. A band of mercenaries,
equipped with tanks, guns and ammunition. Several
Central American republics tell of threats from this
so-called "Sounds like the days of Rich-Hard-Davis
"Caribbean Legion." } ~~so~~ The Commission hopes
to find out whether there really is such a high-powered
outfit.

Which brings us to our high powered
Ivory friend, Nelson Case.