

December 30, 1970
Dallas Townsend

Good evening everybody.

Thirty-Eight men were killed today in a coal mine explosion at Hyden Kentucky. The men were working sixteen hundred feet inside the mouth of a Finley Coal Company shaft. A rescue team found the dead miners about five hours after the explosion. It was the worst mine disaster in Kentucky history.

BASQUE

Generalissimo Francisco Franco today commuted the death sentences of six Basque nationalists who had been convicted of murder and banditry. This automatically reduces the sentences to thirty years in prison. Franco thus apparently heeded both the weight of world opinion and this advice of his counselors. Tonight - in his Year-End address to the Spanish people - Franco said he took this action because of the overwhelming support they have given his regime.

The Vatican - which had urged clemency - says it's enormously relieved.

MOSCOW

In Moscow, defense attorneys asked the Russian Supreme Court to spare the lives of two Jews - condemned to death for plotting to hijack an airliner. The court hearing resumes tomorrow.

Three prominent American Jewish leaders discussed the case this afternoon with President Nixon. They say they were heartened by the President's knowledge, concern and understanding. They indicate that Mr. Nixon and Secretary of State Rogers told them the government had taken some actions in the matter, but gave no details.

VIETNAM

A Communist-proclaimed three-day ceasefire for

**New Year's went into effect today in Vietnam. Shortly before
it began, Saigon military sources disclosed that earlier this
week American warplanes bombed and strafed a Communist
ammunition convoy moving through Laos - touching off a
chain reaction of secondary explosions. It was called one of
the war's most successful ~~successful~~^{bombing} missions.**

SENATE

The Senate this afternoon gave final congressional approval to the bill financing Federal Health, Welfare and Labor programs. The amount of money involved - Eighteen Billion, Nine-Hundred-Million-Dollars. The vote - Sixty-Nine to nothing. After that, the Senate adopted a measure passed by the House - guaranteeing One-Hundred-Twenty-Five Million-Dollars in loans to the financially troubled Penn-Central Railroad. The Penn Central contends it must have that money to meet January payrolls or face a possible shutdown of its operations.

Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Elliott Richardson says the Nixon Administration may close all eight hospitals of The Public Health Service - along with thirty out-patient clinic's serving Merchant Seaman and Coast Guardsmen. The reason - says Richardson - they are costly and outmoded. But Congressmen who oppose any such move argue that instead of saving money, it might cost Billions of dollars - overloading Veterans Administration Hospitals with

persons now receiving free care at the public health service facilities. Secretary Richardson warns that a decision must be made soon, because the proposed Federal budget for fiscal Nineteen-Seveny-Two is nearing completion, and the budget is under severe stress.

NIXON

President Nixon - who'll be fifty-eight on January Ninth - underwent a routine physical checkup for two hours today and was pronounced in excellent health. His personal physician - said the President has "a young man's blood pressure", with everything normal. The doctor however, did urge him to get more recreation, especially in view of what he called the President's "backbreaking work schedule" which begins before seven A.M. and ends near midnight. Following the examination as he emerged from Bethesda Naval Hospital, the Chief Executive talked with newsmen, one of whom asked him about reports of his daughter Tricia's impending engagement. With a laugh, Mr. Nixon replied - "I'll be the last to know."

SECURITIES

Also today, the President signed into law a measure which insures investors against financial losses if their brokers invoke the bankruptcy law. The bill creates a new corporation to protect securities investors - similar to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation which protects bank deposits.

trackbeds at speeds up to fifty miles per hour. At higher speeds, up to three hundred miles an hour, small but powerful magnets would lift the train a few inches above the trackbed - while at the same time holding it on course. Research on magnetic trains is already underway in Japan where the National Railway plans to have one in operation by 1965.

He'll have this report from Lowell Thomas after this message.

TRAINS

A University of California physicist says we soon may be riding railway trains that actually fly through the air - suspended by magnets from the rails and trackbed below.

Doctor Paul Richards - who has studied the feasibility of magnetic suspension for rail transportation - says the trains would have rubber wheels and run over solid aluminum trackbeds at speeds up to fifty miles per hour. At higher speeds, up to three hundred miles an hour, small but powerful magnets would lift the train a foot above the trackbed - while at the same time holding it on course.

Research on magnetic trains is already underway in Japan where the National Railway plans to have one in operation by Nineteen-Eighty.

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THOMAS TAPE

*Lowell Thomas is in Anchorage, Alaska, tonight and
he sends us this report.*

Lowell...

~~T. Thomas~~

Tape Runs: 1:37

Outcue: So Long....

(SUGGESTED FOLLOW TO THOMAS TAPE - "MOSCOW")

Thank you Lowell. Dallas Townsend saying Goodnight.